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METROPOLITAN
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KING ARTHUR'S COUNTRY

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KING ARTHUR'S COUNTRY

BY

F. J. SNELL

Author of "The Blackmore Country," etc.

1926

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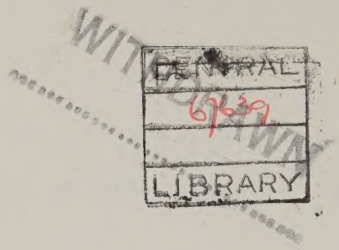

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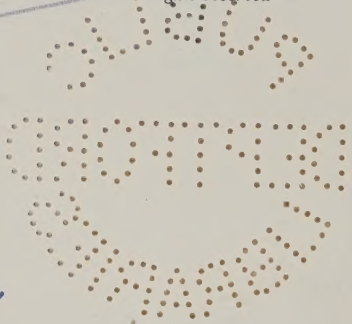

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PREFACE

THE present work is an attempt to focus the results of Arthurian topographical research hitherto available only in scattered form. Able and interesting essays have from time to time appeared, the object of which has been to draw attention to some one aspect of the subject—for example, Mr. W. F. Dickinson's *King Arthur in Cornwall.* Mr. Glennie's *Arthurian Localities,* partly based on Mr. Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales,* makes Arthur a North Briton and locates his activities in the Lowlands of Scotland. The following pages are devoted to the advocacy of no new, original or revolutionary opinion on the question of Arthur's historical achievements or the field in which they were effected, nor is any attempt made to reconcile antagonistic theories or conflicting traditions. The writer's personal contribution being chiefly confined to the south-west of England, he finds it hard to conceive of Arthur otherwise than as a Southern hero, but he is compelled to recognise that the North of England and Scotland have a rightful share in the broad inheritance of Arthur's fame. So also have Wales and Brittany.

The work, then, is a record of Arthur's legendary connections with places near and far, combined with accounts of modern conjectures and claims, not all of which can be regarded as admissible. This observation applies with peculiar force to the late Mr. Bilderbeck's whimsical *Lancashire and King Arthur.* More catholic and comprehensive, Mr. T. Cuming Walters's genial little work, *King Arthur's Lost Land,* published some years ago, deals with the popular and picturesque elements of Arthurian topography. It exhibits wide reading and possesses undoubted charm, but it does not pretend to be nearly exhaustive,

and contains more than one extraordinary error. On so capital a matter as the traditional site of Camelot, Mr. Walters has gone astray.

Fullest acknowledgments are due to the writings of the late Professor Sir John Rhys, and many other works have been consulted. Every important obligation has, it is hoped, been stated in the text. As to variation in the spelling of proper names, there is, except in rare instances, no finality or ground for preference in selecting from their sometimes Protean mediæval forms; and unless the variation is such as to obscure the reference, I have thought it best to follow the orthography of the writings under review.

F. J. SNELL.

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INTRODUCTORY

As the ensuing pages deal with King Arthur's Country, it seems desirable and is perhaps necessary to preface that account with some discussion of the personality involved in the title. From the vigorous manner in which Caxton sets about the task of proving the existence of Arthur, it is clear that even in the fifteenth century much scepticism prevailed on that subject. Milton doubted whether there was ever a real Arthur, and so, it is said, did Tennyson. On the other hand, it is curious to observe that Gibbon, the critical historian of the declining Roman Empire, appears to accept the fact of Arthur's existence as a British leader after the withdrawal of the legions. Modern scholarship tends to recognise more than one Arthur.

It is evident that some explanation must be found for the widely diffused belief in the actuality of Arthur, who cannot have been simply a hero of mediæval romance; and his form looms hazily on the historical horizon as a divinity of the ancient Celts. A glimpse of him in that character is afforded by Plutarch, who tells us that a certain Demetrius was sent by the Emperor of Rome on a mission of exploration to the British Isles. This old-world investigator brought back a report of the religious ideas of the inhabitants, among which was the following: "Moreover, they said, there is an island in which Cronus is imprisoned with Briareus keeping guard over him as he sleeps; for, as they put it, sleep is the bond forged for Cronus. They add that around him are many divinities, his henchmen and attendants."

Now this story bears a striking resemblance to the tale

of the sleeping Arthur, of which several versions will be given in the sequel. Demetrius writes in the terms of Greek mythology, but in other notices of Celtic religion there is an indication of the *name* Arthur. Mention is made of a god Artaius, worshipped by the Allobroges of Gaul, and identified with Mercury. "Into the pantheon of deities represented in the four ancient Mabinogion," writes Mr. T. W. Rolleston, "there came from some other tribal source another group headed by Arthur, the god Artaius." This Arthur took the place of Gwydion (Science and Light), who slew Pryderi, son of Pwyll, King of Hades, by his magic and charms. His father was Uther Ben (=Bran), and his sister Gwyar (Gore, a war-goddess), who married Lot (=Lludd), and by him had three sons, Gwalchmai (Falcon of May=Llew Llaw Gyffes, sun-god, the Irish Lugh, later Sir Gawaine), Medrawt (=Dylan, sea-god, later Sir Mordred) and Gwalchaved (Falcon of Summer, later Sir Galahad). Just as Arthur superseded Gwydion, so in the same mythological circle Myrddin succeeded the sky- and sun-god Nudd. When Wales became christianised these different gods were not forgotten, but were deposed from their celestial dignity to the rank of human celebrities. Arthur became a perfect warrior and mighty potentate; Merlin, an unequalled mage; and Nudd and Gwydion great enchanters. It may be added that one of the names of the Celtic Pluto was in Irish Morc or Marc, and in Welsh March ab Meirchion. He became the Cornish King Mark of the romances.

The Round Table, though not named by Nennius or Geoffrey of Monmouth, may be earlier than the days of chivalry. Sir John Rhys, at any rate, assigns to it a mythological import. Arthur, he says, "would probably have to be regarded as a Culture Hero; for a model king and the institutor of the Knighthood of the Round Table, he is represented as the leader of expeditions to the isles of Hades. Arthur's knights are called those of the Round Table. On the whole, it is the Table probably, and not its roundness, that is a fact to which to call attention, as it

possibly means that Arthur's Court was the first early court where those present sat at a table. . . . The Arthurian legend traces it (the Round Table) to Arthur's father, Uthr Bendragon, in whom we have under one of his many names the King of Hades, the realm whence all culture was fabled to have been derived. In a wider sense the Round Table possibly signified plenty or abundance, and might be compared with the Table of the Ethiopians at which Zeus and the other gods of Greek mythology used to feast from time to time."

In another passage the same learned professor remarks that "his (Arthur's) name allows us to suppose that he was associated, in some special sense, with agriculture over the entire Celtic world of antiquity." The Latin *arare* (to plough or till) and the Old English verb "to *ear*," which has the same meaning, will naturally occur to our minds in this connection; Celtic speech belonged to the same family of languages. Sir John Rhys supposes an early Brythonic form, *Artor* (genitive, *Artôros*), which in Welsh would yield the familiar form *Arthur*.

If there was a real Arthur, it is quite conceivable that in process of time he may have been confused with his divine namesake, to the extent at least of receiving a vast accession of importance. But was there a real Arthur? Was there, that is to say, a British prince and generalissimo of that name, who, after the Romans had quitted the island, successfully stemmed the tide of Saxon invasion? Now Gildas, a contemporary British writer, mentions the names of several distinguished countrymen—notably that of Aurelius Ambrosius—but he does not name Arthur. This silence has been deemed significant and indeed conclusive; there was no Arthur. If we could rely on a statement of Giraldus Cambrensis the silence of Gildas as to Arthur was calculated, a deliberate piece of revenge. It is said that a work on the acts of Arthur was actually penned by the British writer, and that the latter, having a personal quarrel with the king, cast his book into the sea. This assertion is essentially improbable, and may have been

prompted by a wish to resolve what was felt to be the otherwise inexplicable problem of a history of the destruction of Britain in which Aurelius appears, and Maelgwyn of Gwynedd, but not Arthur.

A fairly simple explanation of the omission—assuming that Arthur is an historical personage—may be found in the character of Gildas's composition. It is called a history, but it does not comprise a consecutive account of the events constituting the great drama to which it refers. Gildas was not *obliged* to mention Arthur. He does, however, distinctly allude to the battle of Mons Badonicus, which later writers make out to have been Arthur's greatest victory. Gildas, however, was out of heart with his countrymen, and especially with their rulers, whose vices he flagellates without mercy. It would therefore have been inconsistent with his stern purpose to have dwelt at any length on a phase of the struggle in which the British were temporarily in the ascendant.

We come to Nennius's *History of the Britons*, in which we do find mention of Arthur. Nennius appears to have flourished in the ninth century of our era—considerably later than the time of Arthur, but, what is even more disquieting, there is grave reason to question whether the famous passage beginning "Then it was that the magnanimous Arthur," etc., formed part of the original work. "His (Arthur's) name," writes Stephens, "is mentioned by Nennius, but as the passage occurs at various places in the different manuscript copies of that historian there is reason to doubt its genuineness, to consider it an addition by his editor, Mark the Hermit." Now Mark the Hermit was of the tenth century.

A very full account of Arthur is presented in Geoffrey of Monmouth's long chronicle. This, however, is so crowded with fables that we may be naturally inclined to reject the authority of a writer who, if his object was not merely to entertain and amuse, was himself extremely credulous and uncritical. Dr. Guest remarks that, "in the latter part of his work which contains the history of Britain, during

its conquest by the Saxons, we may possibly find the germs of facts unnoticed elsewhere"; and as it was a literary convention, long after Geoffrey's time, to include myths, as well as the solid facts of history, in the chronicles of cities and countries, we ought not to allow ourselves to be too deeply prejudiced by the manifest absurdities of earlier portions of Geoffrey's narrative. With regard to our particular period, it is deserving of notice that, in so far as we can check Geoffrey of Monmouth by Gildas, the younger writer's statements appear to embody a large element of truth. We may take as examples the references to Constantine, Aurelius Conan and Vortipore, Arthur's successors.

Freeman attaches much importance to a story in the Life of St. Gildas. He admits that the date and author of the piece are uncertain, and regards any story which brings Arthur and Gildas together as legendary "on the face of it." "But," he writes, "this legend, like many other legends, preserves unconsciously a kernel of truth." It shows Arthur, not as king, but as "tyrant" of Cornwall and Devonshire. "Tyrant" in this context has, according to Freeman, a peculiar signification. It means a rebel prince. Disloyalty, however, in this case is justified by the conduct of the suzerain in carrying off Arthur's wife to the inaccessible island of Ynysvitrin. There Arthur besieges him with a countless host from Cornwall and Devon. At this juncture Gildas arrives, induces Melwas to restore Guinevere to her husband, and effects a complete reconciliation between the two kings. "The tyrant Arthur," insists Freeman, "in rebellion against the king of the 'æstiva regio,' is something which neither the biographer of Gildas nor anyone else would have invented; it must be a bit of genuine tradition." In order to make his position quite clear, he adds: "I am very far from pledging myself to the historical truth of the statement that Melwas carried off Guenever, wife of the tyrant Arthur, and hid her in the isle of Avalon. But I do say that that statement belongs to a stage of Arthurian legend much earlier than any of those to which we are used."

The story has attracted the notice of another scholar, who is also disposed to give it serious attention. Rhys thus comments:

"The first version to be noticed of the capture of the queen by Melwas is composed in the historical style; it occurs in the *Vita Gildae*, usually ascribed to Caradoc of Llancarvan, who lived in the twelfth century. There Melwas is represented as the king reigning over the realm which the writer terms Aestiva Regio, by which he must have meant the reader to understand Somerset. Melwas is said to have been looking out for a whole year, *per unius anni circulum*, for an opportunity to take the queen. Having at last espied a suitable time—whether with or without her connivance is not stated—he carried her away *violation et raptam* to a place of great strength on account of the waters and marshes around it; that was Glastonbury, or, as the writer Latinises it, Glastonia, to which he adds the explanation that the name meant *Urbs Vitrea*. In due time Arthur, whom he styles *tyrannus*, marched with the armies of Cornwall and Devon to lay siege to Glastonbury; but at the instance of Gildas and the abbot peace was made, and the queen restored to her husband. It is very doubtful that the Life was written by Caradoc, but it is certain that the story is ancient. . . .

"The choice of this term [*tyrannus*] may be regarded as a touch of history, in so far as the writer avoids calling Arthur a *rex*, while that title, as applied to Melwas, belongs undoubtedly to mythology, as does the story as a whole, in spite of Gildas and the abbot introduced into it. *Tyrannus* here, presumably, marks the same distinction which is kept up in Welsh by calling Arthur emperor. The Welsh have borrowed the Latin title *imperator*, 'emperor,' and made it into *amherawdyr*, later *amherawdwr*, so it is not impossible that, when the Roman imperator ceased to have anything to say to this country, the title was given to the highest officer in the island, namely the *Comes Britanniæ*, and that in the words *yr Amherawdyr Arthur*, 'the Emperor Arthur,' we have a remnant of our insular history."

Rhys's interpretation of *tyrannus*, it will have been noticed, is quite different from Freeman's, but it may be that neither of these learned authorities is right, and that the term is used more or less in the ordinary sense. Dr. Guest identifies Arthur with Owen Finddu, the son of Aurelius Ambrosius, and explains his being called the son of Uther by Geoffrey of Monmouth having misunderstood the term applied to him by Nennius, *map uter*, "the terrible boy," because he was cruel from his childhood.

Incidentally Rhys deals with a problem which must have exercised the minds of not a few who accept the tradition that Arthur was a Cornish prince, and that his last battle was fought, as Geoffrey states, on the Camel. "It is surely improbable," remarks Mr. Dickinson, "that Arthur could have been confronted in Cornwall by a great army of these Northern savages. On the Forth they were numerous and much at home." In penning these words Mr. Dickinson was evidently not aware how great a plague the "Gwyddelod" (or Goidels) were to the people of Wales, whose literature breathes the utmost detestation of them. Rhys appears to waver between an historical and a mythological explanation of the Pictish difficulty.

"Modern Welsh writers," he says, "represent Melwas as coming from Scotland, and this view would seem to admit of being explained in somewhat the same way as that in which Medrod, from Geoffrey's time down, was more or less closely associated with Picts or Scots; he is sometimes called a Pictish prince. We have a trace probably of the same idea in Cormac's *Glossary* when he calls Glastonbury the Glastonbury of the Goidels, or the Gaels, that is to say in Latin the *Scotti*; this we take to be the Irish echo of a Brythonic belief that Maelwas, under whatever name, was a Goidel or *Scottus*. It would be hard to decide how far this may be taken to refer to an occupation of Gower or Somerset by invaders from Ireland. But, even leaving this out of the question, the form assumed by the myth is no more surprising than the substitution of Ireland for Hades in the story of Bran's expedition on behalf of his

sister Branwen.[1] But once Hades became Ireland, its head[2] would naturally be regarded as a Goidel."

We might almost expect that the professor, having so fine an instinct for the mythical significance of Celtic legends, would look with disfavour on the bald literalism of a real Arthur. But, with all the evidence before him, he is not prepared to reject the ordinary account of Arthur as impossible or even as unlikely. "To sum up these remarks, it may be granted that there was an historical Arthur, who may have held the office, which under the Roman administration was known as that of *Comes Britanniæ*; that he may, like Aurelius Ambrosius, have been partly of Roman descent; that Maelgwn was his nephew, whom Gildas accuses of slaying his uncle; that his name Arthur was either the Latin Artorius or else a Celtic name belonging in the first instance to a god Arthur. . . . On the one hand, we have the man Arthur, whose position we have tried to define; and on the other, a greater Arthur, a more colossal figure, of which we have, so to speak, but a *torso* rescued from the wreck of the Celtic pantheon."

Something has been said about the Picts and Scots as Arthur's enemies; and it need not surprise us that the adherents of a certain school of thought are of opinion that less difficulty is caused by retaining them in the north and making Arthur a North Country prince, than by contemplating a contest between them in the south-west of Britain. A Scotsman is eminently inclined to this view, and so we find that Mr. Stuart Glennie sees in Arthur "a great Northern Guledig," or military leader. "I would suggest," he writes, "that in the Arthur of Romance there are confounded more persons than one, though the Arthur to whom, as an actual historical character, the traditions of the great conquering king are ultimately to be traced was simply a sixth-century Guledig, or Leader of the Northern Cymry." Mr. Skene's identifications of Arthur's battlefields north of the Tweed, combined with venerable

[1] See the Mabinogion for this story. [2] Melwas.

local legends and traditions, give strong support to this theory.

It must, however, be evident to all that a sixth-century leader, whether of the Southern or the Northern Cymry, is not the Arthur that we know. The founder of the order of the Table Round was a knightly personage, born in the Age of Chivalry, as were also his followers. Where were they bred? Evidence points strongly in the direction of Brittany, whither fugitives, escaping from the swords of the ruthless Saxons, had carried the tradition of the matchless chief, who was ultimately endowed with the gifts and graces which Christianity associated with the conduct of war at the time of the Crusades. In the extent of his power and the magnitude of his conquests the ideal Arthur may have been modelled on Charlemagne, but Lytton suggests with much probability that in the essentials of character the Arthur of Romance reproduces Richard Cœur-de-Lion. "Poetically speaking," he says, "the mythic Arthur was the Father of the age of adventure and knighthood, and the legends respecting him reigned with full influence in the period which Richard represents." If we do not choose to make King Richard the actual prototype of Arthur, we must admit that the portrait of the latter in *Morte Darthur* derives most of its colours from the knight-errantry of which Richard was so shining an example. Thus, under the influence of Anglo-Norman poets, the stern features of the Romano-British chief, received from their neighbours of Brittany, was softened and transformed into the lineaments of a perfect warrior and an almost perfect man.

The limits of "King Arthur's Country" are easily defined. Practically it is co-extensive with those portions of Britain in which the Celts long maintained their independence against the Teutonic "wolves," and, across the sea, the north-west corner of France, in which multitudes of exiles appear to have found a refuge with a people of the same race and language. In general, the legends of Arthur are rooted only in the soil of those districts, though

in a few instances literary tradition has created associations which we do not think expedient to ignore. It may be added that, although many real places are named in the *Morte Darthur*, numerous localities appear to belong to the region of pure fancy. "The details of Arthur's march to Rome," writes Sir Edward Strachey, "are so accurate that I think Malory may have had actual knowledge of the road, which indeed must have been familiar to many men—soldiers, priests and merchants—in the days of Edward IV. But of the rest of the history and the geography of the book before us we can only say that they are something

> Apart from place, withholding time,
> But flattering the golden prime

of the great hero of English romance." Any attempt to bring this romantic geography into precise correspondence with the world of reality is foredoomed to failure. "Desert places and the extremities of the earth," to quote from the Mabinogi of *The Lady of the Fountain*, were not in "darkest Africa" or at the South Pole, but in Western Europe, and offered a fine field for an imaginative nomenclature. Cameliard, the realm of Leodegrance, was not a real kingdom, and its whereabouts are somewhere in a fairy-land of Celtdom which floats above mere political divisions. Whether we find it in the West of Britain, or in Cumbria, or on the Continent, depends on our view of the situation of Arthur's home-domain, from which it cannot have been far distant.[1] In the prose romance of *Merlin*, it is called Carmelide, so that it seems idle to speculate on the basis of the name. It belongs, in fact, to the same category as the Waste Lands, whose queen received Arthur in the barge, and *la terre deserte* of King Claudas—undiscovered, and undiscoverable, tracts. Even the land of Gore is so refined and spiritualised that its connection with Gower seems an

[1] Six days' march. Malory rather conveys the impression that Cameliard was a part of Wales—east-central; but Wales is sometimes confused with Cumbria.

accident. These, however, are matters that will be dealt with in the appropriate sections. Not the least charm of Malory's work is its vagueness and mystery, but here and there it is possible to penetrate beneath the flowery surface and reveal secrets locked up in names which appear to defy analysis, etymology or geographical reference.

Delimitation of Arthur's actual kingdom is as difficult a task as it is to settle the principal dates of his life. With regard to the latter, Geoffrey of Monmouth informs us that he died in 541; and tradition represents him to have lived to a very advanced age—makes him, in fact, a centenarian. Welsh legends also know of three Guineveres, but the strict facts seem to have been forgotten. On the whole, it seems likely that there was such a leader as Arthur whose possessions extended along the southern and part of the northern shore of the Severn Sea. The contemporary and perhaps the opponent of Cerdic, he may have been accepted by less-talented princes as their *guledig*, and in that capacity have conducted expeditions in distant parts of Britain. The Roman roads were at the service of the British commanders, and what the Romans had accomplished, in beating back Picts and Saxons, their successors may have emulated. Though these suppositions are on a diminishing scale of probability, none of them can be described as downright incredible. But the Emperor Arthur, lord paramount of half Europe—he, it is certain, is wholly a figment of the imagination. One so illustrious could not have escaped, even in the darkest of the Dark Ages, the homage of a thousand pens, and "King Arthur's Country" would have been a theme of unmanageable extent and diversity.

We have seen how Rhys regards the Welsh title *amherawdyr*, or emperor, as applied to Arthur. To us it seems that it should belong to the last phase of his romantic evolution. "Plain facts," writes Stephens, "were embellished into glorious fictions; brave warriors became great heroes; and Arthur, an insignificant chieftain in the sixth century, grew into a valorous warrior in the eighth, and by the twelfth had become emperor of the whole civilised

world." In the Iolo MSS., Rhys ab Tewdwr is stated to have restored the system of the Round Table, "as it had been at Caerlleon upon Usk under the Emperor Arthur, in the time of the sovereignty of the Kymry over the island of Britain and the adjacent islands." Malory, though he does not confine Arthur's sovereignty within insular limits, nowhere calls Arthur anything but a king, doubtless because "emperor" was a little foreign to the rulers of Britain, and without sanction from the "French book."

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KING ARTHUR'S COUNTRY

CORNWALL

I

Tintagel

A tour in Cornwall would not as a rule be thought complete without a visit being paid to the far-famed ruins of Tintagel Castle. A scene so wildly picturesque might dispense with the glamour derived from its legendary associations, but the craving to learn is instinctive in the human spirit, and an illustration of its working occurs in one of the earliest tourists in the duchy—none other than Arthur himself. Amidst the vague geography of the *High History of the Holy Graal* one description stands out with almost startling vividness. It is as follows:

"They (Arthur, Lancelot and Gawain) departed thence, and rode right busily on until they came into a very different land, scarce inhabited of any folk, and found a little castle in a combe. They came thitherward and saw that the enclosure of the castle was fallen down into an abysm, so that none might approach it on that side, but it had a right fair gateway and a door tall and wide whereby one entered. They beheld a chapel that was right fair and rich, and below was a great ancient hall. They saw a priest appear in the midst of the castle, bald and old, that had come forth of the chapel.

"They are come thither and alighted, and asked the priest what the castle was, and he told them that it was the great Tintagel. 'And how is this ground all caved in about the castle?' 'Sir,' saith the priest, 'I will tell you. Sir,' saith he, 'King Uther Pendragon,[1] that was father

[1] On the subject of this title Sir John Rhys makes some interesting remarks: "In the struggle between the Kymry and the Angles after the battle of Chester (613) the Kings of Gwynedd [North Wales] doubtless considered that both their dignity and their power were

to King Arthur, held a great court and summoned all his barons. The king of this castle that then was here was called Gorlois. He went to the court and took his wife with him that was named Ygerne, and she was the fairest dame in any kingdom. King Uther sought acquaintance of her for her great beauty, and regarded her and honoured her more than all the others of his court. King Gorlois departed thence and made the queen come back to this castle for the dread that he had of King Uther Pendragon. King Uther was very wroth with him, and commanded him to send back the queen his wife. King Gorlois said he would not. Thereupon King Uther Pendragon defied him, and then laid siege about this castle where the queen was. King Gorlois was gone to seek for succour. King Uther Pendragon had Merlin with him, of whom you have heard tell that he was so crafty. He made him be changed into the semblance of King Gorlois, so that he entered there

at stake. These are spoken of in Welsh literature as the Crown of Britain, for the *Dux Britanniarum* had not only passed into the Guledig of Britain, but the latter had come to be spoken of as the king or monarch of Britain. This last title would seem to have got into use before the middle of the sixth century, when Gildas described Maelgwn as the *insularis draco*, or the island dragon, the island being probably Britain, and not Mona, as is sometimes supposed; and here we have an early instance of the habit so common in Welsh poetry of calling a king or great leader a dragon, as when a mythical Guledig of Lower Britain is always called Uthr Bendragon or Uthr Head-dragon, the reputed father of King Arthur. The Welsh words are *draig* and *dragon*, which, like the English word *dragon*, take us back to the Latin *draco*, *draconis*, a dragon, and these in their turn to the Augustan era of the Roman Empire, when dragons began to figure in purple on the standards of some of the legions and to be borne before military leaders: the custom then extended itself to the emperors in time of peace; and the Welsh words make it highly probable that the practice was among the Roman traditions cherished by the Kymric Guledigs or over-kings, whom the bards sometimes styled Kessarogian or Cæsarians, and men of Roman descent; nor have we to look elsewhere for the explanation of the fact that the Red Dragon, which figures in the story of Vortigern and Merlin, has always been the favourite flag of Wales."

It may be noted that Geoffrey of Monmouth makes Uther the brother of Aurelius Ambrosius, a real British leader mentioned by Gildas. Uther, Miss Courtney tells us, is still used as a Christian name in Cornwall.

within by Merlin's art and lay that night with the queen, and so begat King Arthur in a great hall that was next to the enclosure there where this abysm is. And for this sin hath the ground sunken in this wise.'

"He cometh with them toward the chapel that was right fair, and had a right rich sepulchre therein. 'Lords, in this sepulchre was placed the body of Merlin, but never mought it be set inside the chapel, wherefore perforce it remained outside. And know of a very truth that the body lieth not within the sepulchre, for so soon as it was set therein it was taken out and snatched away, either in God's behalf or the enemy's, but which we know not.' 'Sir,' saith King Arthur, 'and what became of King Gorlois?' 'Sir,' saith he, 'the king slew him on the morrow of the night he lay with his wife, and so forthwith espoused Queen Ygerne, and in such manner as I tell you was King Arthur conceived in sin that is now the best king in the world.'

"King Arthur hath heard this as concerning his birth that he knew not, and is a little shamed thereof and confounded on account of Messire Gawain and Lancelot. He himself marvelleth much thereof, and much it misliketh him that the priest hath said so much. They lay that night in the hold, and so departed thence on the morrow when they had heard mass." (Sebastian Evans's Trans., Everyman's Library Edition, pp. 242–3.)

Harmless curiosity in this instance led to an untoward discovery, but that for our purpose is a side issue. On a comparison of the above narrative with the version in the *Morte Darthur*, it would seem that Master Blihis [1] had a better acquaintance with the locality than Malory, but he does not write with the sure touch of personal familiarity; and, though he lays stress on the existence of the "abysm," the origin of which he attributes to Divine displeasure, he is silent as to the part which the "abysm" plays in sundering one portion of the fortress from the other. Nor does he

[1] If he was indeed the author of the romance—a doubtful conjecture.

say anything of the sea as an element of security. To all appearance he takes account only of the landward side of the castle. As Mr. Dickinson observes, "The romancer has made a capital error in placing the adventure on the mainland, and a minor error in assigning the same position to the chapel."

Geoffrey of Monmouth, who is our oldest authority, makes Ulphin ask, "Who can advise you in this matter, when no force will enable us to have access to her in the town of Tintagel? For it is situated upon the sea, and on every side surrounded by it; and there is but one entrance into it, and that through a straight rock, which three men shall be able to defend against the whole power of the kingdom." Geoffrey evidently regarded the "town of Tintagel" as *limited* to the island, or rather peninsula, since it is not true, as he states, that it is completely surrounded by the sea.

An older form of the name—Dundagel—is said to mean "the fort impregnable." If this be correct, it is a description not ill bestowed, at any rate on the seaward part of the divided fortress. There have been other guesses. The well-known Cornish folklorist Robert Hunt, by a veritable *tour de force*, brings the name into direct correspondence with the shameful story of the ruse practised on Ygerne. *Dixith* ("deceit") has passed, he supposes, by easy transitions first into *dixel*, and then into *dagel* or *tagel*. The initial syllable is a variant of *Din*, *dinas*, and thus we arrive at the conclusion that the whole signifies neither more nor less than the Castle of Guile. This romantic but not, it is to be feared, very scientific etymology did not commend itself to George Borrow, who declared that the real meaning of the name was "the house in the gill of the hill," which comes very near to the description in the *History of the Graal*—"a little castle in a combe."

The only approach to the island—on account of its isolation it is fair to apply this term to the tiny peninsula—is by a ridge which rises abruptly from the sea and traverses the chasm. Thence one ascends to the summit

by a narrow path cut in the face of the rock. It is likely that at one period the two sections of the fortress were connected by a drawbridge. The chasm was formerly not nearly so wide as at present; and early seventeenth-century writers had no doubt that a drawbridge had existed — Carew says a century before his time, and Norden, within living memory. Well, Leland should be able to resolve this difficulty for us. Unluckily he makes two statements which are not quite conformable. In one place he speaks of a drawbridge as uniting the severed portions of the castle, but later he writes that access to the island is afforded by a rough structure of long elms. No earlier trace of Tintagel has been preserved than that contained in the Domesday survey, which, it must be owned, is sufficiently dubious. However, Tintagel has been thought to be identical with the "Donecheniv" of that record; and "Donecheniv," according to Gilbert,[1] signifies "a fort or castle with a bridge."

There is not a single building, whether on the mainland or the island, that is not post-Norman. Norden, who was Surveyor of Woods to James I. and died in 1628, aged seventy-eight, has left what seems to be an accurate, but is by no means a pleasing, sketch of Tintagel as it was in his time. The great gateway on the mainland was then intact, as were also the keep and lower court, or nearly so. Traces appear of a recent collapse of portions of the insular buildings, and the general state of the remains is much as at present. They consist of a slightly pointed arch forming the gateway of the outer wall; another arch of a similar pattern, known as the Iron Gate, in the wall that apparently protected a landing-place; and, outside the enclosures, all that is left of a weather-beaten little chapel. (It was fifty-four feet by twelve wide and is said to have been dedicated to St. Uliane.)

Since Norden's time the keep on the mainland has been allowed to become ruinous, but its massive fragments testify to its former strength. Greater interest, perhaps,

[1] C. S. Gilbert, author of *An Historical Survey of Cornwall.*

attached to the insular portion of the fort. Mounting the rude stairway before mentioned, we are confronted by a heavily-nailed door, turned by a ponderous key, which ushers us on to a green sward defended by low turreted walls. Again following the path, we arrive at a plateau several acres in extent, in which is the site, now hardly traceable, of the tiny church of St. Uliane. Within this space is a moss-grown, sculptured moorstone, which is pointed out as the altar-stone, but of which a curiously different account has been given. The carving of this stone is said to have beguiled the tedious leisure of one John Northampton, Lord Mayor of London, who had been banished to Tintagel by King Richard II. for magnifying his right honourable office.

To the north of the chapel is the entrance of a subterranean passage supposed to lead down to the sea. There is no reason to associate this passage with the tale of Merlin's inability to rest in peace within the hallowed walls of the chapel, but beneath the headland is "Merlin's Cave," which completely perforates it; and the restless spirit of the mage, with long flowing beard, is reputed to wander eternally along the shore. Arthur and his knights also return ever and anon to this well-loved region. Perhaps, however, the favourite belief is that Arthur haunts the spot in the form of a chough. Formerly, if not now, a Cornishman would have hesitated to harm one of that feathered tribe for fear that he might do violence to his illustrious compatriot. A few specimens still linger around Tintagel, though in the rest of Cornwall these birds are practically extinct.

Miss Courtney relates a pretty story of Tintagel. According to one version of the Cornish legend, Mordred was slain by Arthur in the great battle at Slaughter Bridge, but another version sets forth that Arthur, having been pierced by the traitor's arrow, was borne from the field to Tintagel Castle, where he expired among his knights. Whilst he lay a-dying, mysterious sounds were heard in the castle, the wind sighing, the sea ever moaning, and this continued

till the hour of the king's burial at Glastonbury. Then, in the pauses of the solemn tolling, came sweet voices from fairyland, welcoming him there, whence he will one day return and be again King of Cornwall.

The romances state, evidently for the delectation of those living afar, that twice a year Tintagel Castle becomes invisible to common eyes. Another superstition makes it appear that, in striding across the chasm, Arthur left the imprint of his foot, which is shown to visitors. If the measurements of his alleged remains at Glastonbury may be relied on, Arthur was much above the ordinary stature, but the huge footmark here indicated is not calculated to impose on the most credulous of mortals. Natural basins in the rocks are called "King Arthur's Cups and Saucers." This is transparently a modern fantasy, and so, we suspect, is the name "Arthur's Chair" applied to a larger hollow, for which, however, there are analogies elsewhere.

In Malory's narrative Gorlois is only a duke, though a mighty one. The title of King of Cornwall—strictly, there are two; the other being Idres—is given to Mark, whose capital was

Tyntagel on its surge-beat hill.

The castle therefore occupied a prominent place in the great love-story of Tristram and Iseult. The twain, indeed, were buried

In King Marc's chapel, in Tyntagel old.

(The quotations are from Matthew Arnold's poem *Tristram and Iseult*, which is of topical interest.)

Reference may be made also to a singular adventure related in the *Morte Darthur*, of which Sir Lancelot was the hero. After riding for two days in a deep forest, he was assailed by a "foul churl" with a great club shod with iron for crossing a long bridge without permission. The knight thereupon drew his sword and clove the fellow's head to the breast. It turned out that the man was the chief porter of the castle, and the people of the fair village at the end of the bridge, both men and women,

cried shame on the deed. Meanwhile Sir Lancelot pursued his way into the castle, and, alighting, tied his horse to a ring in the wall. There he saw a fair green court, and made ready to fight. He had not long to wait. Presently there emerged two great giants with horrible clubs in their hands, but Sir Lancelot discomfited them both, and, entering the hall, found there threescore ladies and damsels, all gentlewomen born, most of whom had been in captivity for seven years. The knight perceived that the giants were intruders, but had no notion who was the lord of the castle, or what castle it was, till he was informed by the grateful prisoners. "Fair sir," said they, "the name of this castle is Tintagel, and a duke owned it some time that had wedded fair Igraine and after wedded her Uther Pendragon and gat on her Arthur." "Well," said Sir Lancelot, "I understand to whom the castle belongeth."

One more, and that probably a not very well-known allusion to Tintagel, may be cited. It is drawn from Chrétien's poem *Erec et Enide*. Erec is Geraint; at any rate, he represents Geraint for the purposes of romance. Chrétien can never have known Tintagel, since he pictures it as a great and important city.

"Erec stayed at court, together with Guivret and Enide, until the death of his father, the king, who was an old man and full of years. The messengers then started out; the nobles who went to seek him, and who were the greatest men of the land, sought and searched for him until they found him at Tintagel, three weeks before Christmas; they told him what had happened to his old white-haired father, and how he was dead and gone. This grieved Erec much more than he showed before the people. But sorrow is not seemly in a king, nor does it become a king to mourn. There at Tintagel, where he was, he caused vigils for the dead and masses to be sung; he promised and kept his promises, as he had vowed, to the religious houses and churches; he did well all that he ought to do; he chose out more than one hundred and sixty-nine of the wretched poor, and clothed them all in new garments. To the poor

clerks and priors he gave, as was right, black copes and warm linings to wear beneath. For God's sake he did great good to all; to those who were in need he distributed more than a barrel of small coins." (Comfort's Trans.)

II

The Castle of Terrabil

From Tintagel we pass to the other castle referred to in the opening chapter of the *Morte Darthur*. Two strong castles had Gorlois, "of which the one hight Tintagil and the other castle hight Terrabil." The latter has been dismissed as a figment of romance—one of the numerous places mentioned in Malory's work which have fanciful appellations and appear to be of the stuff that dreams are made of. The name of this fortress might well dissuade from any attempt to localise it, but the effort is not so fruitless as may at first be imagined. If we turn to the corresponding passage in Geoffrey's chronicle, we shall find that he calls the castle not "Terrabil," but Dimilioc. Now Dimilioc, under the slightly altered form of "Damelihoc," figures in the Domesday inquest. It is about eight miles from Tintagel, in the parish of St. Kew, and adjoins the road leading from Tintagel to the estuary of the River Camel.

Doubtless Malory conceived of "Terrabil" as regularly fortified with bastions and the like—he speaks of its many issues and *posterns*—but Dimilioc, or Dameliock—the real "castle of Terrabil"—offers no interesting spectacle of hoary ruins similar to that at Tintagel. It consists of nothing more picturesque than earthworks. These, however, are of imposing dimensions, the middle rampart being eleven yards thick, while the fosse at its foot is ten yards wide. The rampart rises to a height of thirty feet and encloses a space 170 yards in diameter. It has been computed that within these lines might be accommodated a garrison

of two thousand men, which could hold out during a ten days' siege. The entire area of the fortress is judged to have been twelve acres, but large portions of the outer circumvallation have been worn down by the plough.

The castle occupies an elevated site, but is dominated by the surrounding hills, so that, had there been artillery in those days, its position would have been anything but secure. The higher the altitude, however, the greater the exposure to the elements—a factor that not improbably determined the selection. According to Gilbert, the interpretation of "Dimilioc" is "the place of battle"; and in and around the spot may have been witnessed forgotten heroisms quite as thrilling as any which accompanied the siege and sortie of the unlucky Gorlois.

III

Camelford

If we follow the account given in the *Morte Darthur*, the last battle between Arthur and Mordred took place "upon a down beside Salisbury, and not far from the seaside." The late Poet Laureate, on the other hand, in his *Passing of Arthur*, represents it to have occurred at "the sunset bound of Lyonnesse," thus favouring an older tradition which located the combat in Cornwall, though not quite so far west as Lyonnesse. Geoffrey of Monmouth affirms that soon after Arthur's landing at Rutupiae (Richborough) an engagement was fought not far from that place. A second encounter ensued at Winchester; and the third and last battle was on the River Cambula in Cornwall. By the Cambula must be intended the Camel, which gives its name to Camelford.

In spite of Malory the ancient tradition held its ground. Stow writes in his *Chronicle*, "After many encounters in which Arthur had always the advantage, the two parties came to a decisive action at Camblan, on the River Camalan,

near the place of Arthur's birth." The identity of the Camalan with the Camel cannot be questioned, so far as this context is concerned. The latter name has, of course, no connection with the hump-back of the desert; it is said to be derived from *Crum Nayle,* signifying "the crooked river." Drayton, in his *Polyolbion,* remarks on its windings, which he attributes to the horror of the stream at the foul outrage committed on its bank.:

> Let Camel of her course, and curious windings boast
> . . . . . .
> Her proper course that loosely doth neglect,
> As frantic, ever since British Arthur's blood
> By Mordred's murtherous hand was mingled with the flood.

Stow is perfectly correct in stating that Camelford is near Arthur's birthplace, if indeed Tintagel was the scene of his nativity. It is about four miles from the castle in the heart of the Cornish moors. Drayton lays stress on this point in the lines:

> No other place on Britain's spacious earth
> Were worthy of his end but where he had his birth.

Egbert, King of Wessex, fought a great battle with the West Welsh in this remote spot in 823; and it is conceivable that the memory of this incident may have been handed down in a confused form and associated with Arthur as the supreme hero of British tradition.

Within a mile of Camelford Road Station is Slaughter Bridge, on the Camel. It is constructed of granite, and was formerly a clapper bridge of the type so common on Dartmoor. The parapets are an afterthought, and much less ancient. At this point Arthur is fabled either to have slain Mordred or to have been himself mortally wounded. It appears, however, that the name "Slaughter Bridge" has been transferred to this structure from one yet more primitive—namely, a large incised stone which lies half a mile away on the bank of the stream and is reputed to mark the place of Arthur's burial. This stone is nine feet nine inches long and two feet three inches wide; and the

county historian, Borlase, records that it was formerly a footbridge on Lord Falmouth's estate at Worthy Vale. It was called Slaughter Bridge in virtue of a tradition that on this ground was fought a sanguinary battle fatal to King Arthur. A few years before 1769, the date of the publication of Borlase's work, Lady Falmouth had formed spiral walks about a hundred yards distant, and removed the stone to the foot of her "improvements."

The older historian Carew refers to the *menhir* in the following terms:

"For testimony of the last battle in which Arthur was killed the old folks thereabouts show you a stone bearing Arthur's name, though now departed to Atry."

The inscription has been a source of no small difficulty. Borlase read it as *Coten hic jacit filius Magari*, but others spelt the last word *Maguri* and explained it as a contraction of *magni Arthuri*. The Rev. W. Jago, of Bodmin, who used casts and rubbings to ensure accuracy, pronounced the true version to be: *Latini ic jacit filius Magarii*. This he interpreted "(The monument) of Latinus; here he lies; son of Magarius."

The Latin is obviously corrupt, but we do not think that Mr. Jago has quite hit on the right conclusion. The Bodfethan *menhir* bears the inscription *Cunogusi hic jacit*, which Sir John Rhys renders "Here lies (the body) of Cunagussus." The two cases are parallel up to a point, and the comparison strongly suggests that the first three words of the Cornish inscription should be taken together. The translation would then run: "Here lies (the body) of Latinus; (he was) the son of Magarius."

Whatever may be the correct solution of this puzzle, it is evident that the inscription contains no allusion to Arthur, though it may be, and almost certainly is, the memorial of a Romanised Briton—one, perhaps, who died fighting for his country.

Mr. Ffolliott Stokes, in *The Cornish Coast and Moors*, propounds the startling notion that Camelford is not merely Camlan, but Camelot. The town or village, as it

exists to-day, is unutterably commonplace and remarkable for the fact that it does not boast even a church. It requires, therefore, a more than ordinary stretch of the imagination to connect so dull a spot with "many-towered Camelot." Even Mr. Stokes, with all his patriotism, concedes the difficulty of recognising in the somnolent townlet the once famous "city of shadowy palaces and stately." He has doubtless been misled by the similarity of the name, but in this Camelford, as we shall see, has no monopoly, Drayton and others, though willing to assign Arthur's last field of battle to Cornwall, give no countenance to this further claim, of which nothing was heard in their day.

IV

Dozmary Pool

Four miles east of Camelford is Dozmary Pool. The description is somewhat misleading, since the sheet of water is something like a mile in circumference, and might be styled with greater propriety a lake or mere. A thousand feet above the level of the sea, with a deep valley on each side, it lies between Row Tor (or the Rough Mountain) and Rame Head. Both hills are brown and barren, and the whole aspect of the moorland, with its masses of granite, prehistoric monoliths and stone circles, is singularly weird.

Dozmary Pool passes as the lake into which Sir Bedivere was commanded to cast Arthur's sword "Excalibur," but this honour appears to have been paid to it only in recent times, since Tennyson gave renewed currency to the Arthur-story. There is, nevertheless, some fitness in the theory owing to the proximity of the traditional site of the battle; and under some conditions the scene is not unworthy of the memorable scene with which it is desired to connect it. Says Mr. Stokes: "As the gloaming steals over the broad shoulder of the hills, and gives to their heathy sides a softness as of velvet, and as the last warm blush in the western

sky is reflected in the still bosom of the lake, we realise the glamour of our surroundings, and the arm clothed in white samite that rose and clutched Excalibur seems almost possible."

Needless to say, the mere is haunted—but not by Arthur. The phantom is that of a not too engaging personage named Tregeagle (pronounced Tregayle). If we are to credit the tales told of him, he was a Cornish Bluebeard, with something of Faust thrown in, and flourished in quite modern times. For his appalling sins he was condemned to the maddening task of emptying Dozmary Pool with a limpet-shell, in the bottom of which was a hole. He was doomed also to move sand from cove to cove on the adjacent shore, the sea always returning it; and being pursued by the devil, to whom he had sold himself, from one spot to another, he can find but one refuge—a hermit's ruined chapel on St. Roche's rocks in East Cornwall.

It is tempting to regard Tregeagle as a travesty of Merlin, son of the devil.[1] The fate of the warlock was to be buried alive, but it was not, so to express it, his natural fate. In *Gareth and Lynette* we meet with the lines:

> Gareth answered them
> With laughter, swearing he had glamour enow
> In his own blood, his princedom, youth and hopes
> To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian Sea.

Now Miss Courtney tells us that the water from the well of St. Ludgvan at Penzance was famous as an eye-wash, but lost this virtue when out of malice an evil spirit spat into it in passing on the way to the Red Sea, whither he had been banished by St. Ludgvan for his ill deeds. She adds: "The Red Sea is the favourite traditional spot here for the banishment of evil spirits." The rough coincidence between this belief and the allusion to the "Arabian

[1] There is a good account of Tregeagle in Hunt's *Drolls and Romances*, a splendid work disappointing from an Arthurian point of view. From this we infer that Tregeagle has been from time to time modernised or rejuvenated, so that he may be Merlin himself!

Sea" in the lines above quoted is sufficiently clear, but the Cornish people were not always successful in expatriating disembodied monsters. The spectre of Merlin, as has been mentioned, haunts the shore at Tintagel.

Although Malory informs us that Merlin's tragic end took place in Cornwall, not, as other writers declare, in Brittany, the memory of the wizard does not appear to be extraordinarily strong or vivid in the duchy. One or two odd predictions are ascribed to him. For example:

> That they should land on the rock of Merlin,
> Who would burn Paul, Penzance and Newlyn.

This prophecy was fulfilled in 1595, when the Spaniards, having disembarked on a rock called Merlin's Car, burnt the church at Paul and marched thence to Penzance, which they also fired. Furthermore, there is in the churchyard of St. Levan a cleft stone, known as Levan's, which is said to have been an object of veneration in King Arthur's time and concerning which Merlin, having visited Cornwall in company with that monarch, composed the following quatrain:

> When, with panniers astride,
> A packhorse can ride
> Through St. Levan's stone,
> The world will be done.

It would be doing injustice to Merlin's (?) ingenuity to understand that there would never be an end of the world. Clearly the meaning is that, in some way at present concealed from finite sense, this miracle, comparable to a camel passing through the eye of a needle, will surely come about, and that then

> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve.

V

Gelliwic

Although we find in the *Morte Darthur* not the faintest allusion to Gelliwic—the name is variously spelt as to the first and last letters, for which *k* and *g* are substituted respectively—it is not too much to say that this was a place of the first Arthurian importance. The Welsh Triads make it one of the three "national thrones," or capital cities, of the island of Britain, the others being Caerlleon-upon-Usk and Penhryn Rhionydd in the North. In one or other of these, his chief seats of empire, Arthur was wont to celebrate the high festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide.

Among the poetical remains of the principality which Stephens holds to be "of undoubted antiquity," is a dialogue between Arthur and Guinevere, of which it will suffice to quote the following stanzas of Stephens's translation:

ARTHUR

Gwenhwyvar, with looks of mildness,
Inform me, if thou knowest,
Where didst thou see me before?

GWENHWYVAR

I saw a man of moderate stature
At the long table of Kelliwig, in Devonshire,
Distributing his wine to his friends around him.

ARTHUR

Gwenhwyvar, charming in discourse,
From woman's lips we look for idle talk,
There truly thou hast seen me.

By "Devonshire" (Dyfnaint) the poet may have intended the modern county of Devon, but it is much more likely that he meant Cornwall, peopled anciently by the same race. On that point more will be said hereafter.

Besides being a royal residence, Gelliwic was one of the three archbishoprics of Britain; and the occupant of the see in Arthur's time was Bedwini, who "blessed Arthur's

meat and drink." Bedwini was, naturally, an ecclesiastic of rare wisdom, and one of his sayings has been preserved in the *Englynion y Clyweid*:

> Hast thou heard what Bedwini sang,
> A gifted bishop of exalted rank?
> "Consider thy word before it is given."

In the tale of *Kilwch and Olwen* there are several allusions to Gelliwic. Thus mention is made of Drem the son of Dremydid, an extraordinary person who, "when a gnat arose in the morning with the sun, could see it from Gelliwic in Cornwall as far off as Pen Blathaon (Caithness?) in North Britain." We read also of a redoubtable archer, one Medyr, the son of Methredydd, whose skill and strength were such that "from Gelliwic he could in a twinkling shoot the wren through the legs upon Esgeir Oervel in Ireland." It was to "Gelliwic in Cornwall" that Arthur withdrew for rest after his labours in hunting the terrible boar. Lastly, according to the Triads, Gelliwic was raided by Medrawd (Mordred) during Arthur's absence abroad. There, with shameless violence, he dragged Gwenhwyvar (Guinevere) from her throne, and left in the court neither meat nor drink, "not even so much as would feed a fly," but consumed and wasted all. This outrage was the direct cause of the battle of Camlan.

Where was Gelliwic? The answer to this question must be based on conjecture, for, unlike that of Caerlleon, its fame has not continued to this day. Hals, an old Cornish antiquary, pronounces in favour of Callington. His judgment, as quoted by Polwhele, is as follows:

"I take this to be the same place mentioned by the Welsh poets or bards, and called by them Kelliwick and King Arthur's palace or court, viz. his court leet or baylywick. Such in his time undoubtedly it was, as Duke of Cornwall or King of Britaine; for this manor of land with its appurtenances were, by Act of Parliament, given to Edward the Black Prince as parcell of the lands of the ancient Kinges or Earles of Cornwall, then translated into a dutchy or dukedom."

There is nothing conclusive in all this. The same arguments might be used of any other Cornish manor. The name Callington is not more like Gelliwic (often written Gelli wic) than, say, Kelly, just over the border, and five miles east-south-east of Launceston.

But let us see what more can be advanced for Callington. In the tale of *Kilwch and Olwen*, the record of Drem's superhuman power of vision is immediately followed by an allusion to Eidyol, who constructed Ehangwen, Arthur's Hall. A traditional "Arthur's Hall" is situated on a tor in the parish of North Hill, not far from Callington, and in the same hundred. Norden thus describes the place:

"It is a square Plott about 60 foote long and about 35 foote broade situated in a playne Mountayne wrowghte some 3 foote in the grounde; and by reason of the depression of the place there standeth a starige or poole of water, the place [being] sett round about with flat stones."

Near the Hall are many rocky basins called by the peasantry Arthur's Troughs, in which, tradition states, he was wont to feed his dogs. Gilbert, in whose *Historical Survey of Cornwall* these particulars are collected, remarks on the custom in the duchy of attributing everything great, everything of unknown antiquity to the famous Arthur. This habit sadly lessens the value of popular evidence, and it is not confined to Cornwall.

As Arthurian memories do not cluster very thickly around Callington, one is prepared to consider with benevolence an alternative theory respecting Gelliwic. Mr. W. H. Dickinson, without affecting to be confident, inclines to find the site at Kelly Rounds (or Castle Killibury)—a notable earthwork on the road between Camelford and Wadebridge, and about two miles from the latter place. The road practically bisects the fortress, the southern portion of which is almost effaced. The northern half, on the other hand, is fairly intact, and shows that the stronghold had two circular ramparts with attendant fosses. The inner rampart is the higher, and is judged to be in some places fifteen feet high. The entrance

was on the west side, and here may be descried the remains of a protective mound.

Mr. Dickinson observes in support of his theory: "The extravagance of the archer, who shot with a hasty longbow from Kelliwic to Ireland, is not quite without significance, for it may be held that Kelliwic, like Kelly Rounds, was opposite the Irish coast." This is certainly a good point; Drem, when performing such a feat, was not likely to choose as his station a southerly spot like Callington.

The fact of Gelliwic being in Cornwall lends support to the traditional belief that the battle of Camlan, which Mordred's behaviour there provoked, took place within the borders of the duchy. Mr. Dickinson, however, is one of those who hold that the whole series of later events occurred in Scotland, so that on this question he is compelled to reject the testimony of the Welsh Triads.

Before taking leave of Gelliwic, reference may be made to its "chief elder," Caradawc Vreichvras. In an *englyn* attributed to Arthur himself the warrior is styled "a pillar of the Cymry." He was the son of Llyr Merini, a prince of Cornwall, and his wife, the beautiful Tegau Eurvron, appears to have been the sister of the better-known Kadwr (or Cador), Earl of Cornwall. In the Anglo-Norman romances Caradoc figures as one of the Knights of the Table Round. He has firm faith in the honour of his wife, and is thus able to drain the Marvellous Horn and carve the tough Boar's Head, when less fortunate husbands fail to accomplish those feats.

Caradawc, though a Cornishman, is asserted to have borne sway over the district of Brychei-niog (Brecknock). This he did by right of his mother, Gwen, granddaughter of Brychan.[1] The famous bard Aneurin testifies to his immense prowess:

> When Caradawc rushed into battle
> It was like the tearing onset of a woodland boar,
> The bull of combat in the field of slaughter.

[1] It is worthy of note that several noble Welsh families trace their descent from Caradawc, though the soundness of such pedigrees may excite a question.

From the same poem we learn that the warrior fell in the sanguinary battle of Cattraeth in which Peredur (Percival) was among the slain.

With reference to Caradawc's cognomen Vreichvras, its true meaning is "of the brawny arm," but the *trouvères* misunderstood it and translated it *Brise Bras.* The late Mr. Alfred Nutt, in his *Popular Studies,* affirms his belief that the French romances were based partially on Welsh texts, but trouble arose from the fact that Welsh names were spelt and pronounced differently. Speaking of Caradoc, he observes: "His standing epithet in Welsh literature is composed of two words written *breich bras,* and meaning great arms; *breich* = arms, and *bras* = great. The French copyist mistaking *bras* for his own *bras,* arm, and making a shot at the unintelligible *breich,* turned the epithet into *brie bras,* or short arms. Now the Welsh term is pronounced *vreich vras,* with the final *s* sounded, and had it reached the French poet orally, instead of in a written form, could never have yielded *brie bras.*"

Brie rather than *brise bras* fits the circumstances of the case as presented in the romances. According to Lady Charlotte Guest, the *trouvères* invented a pretty story relating to Caradoc's *brise bras,* which, she says, they interpreted not as the "broken," but as the "wasted" arm. It is as follows: An enchanter fixed on the knight's arm a serpent which was to go on gnawing him until his lady-love consented to take his place. On hearing this, the brave girl resolved to relieve him of the curse, but, at the very moment when the serpent flung itself from Caradoc's wasted arm to the lady's fair neck, her brother struck off its head with his sword, and so broke the spell. Nevertheless, the knight's arm did not recover its original size and strength, and thus he became known, according to some authorities, as *Brise Bras.*

The Lady Tegau Eurvron's brother, who performed the feat of decapitating the serpent, was the renowned Kadwr (Cador), one of Arthur's three knights of battle (the others being Lancelot and Owain, son of Urien Rheged) who fled

neither for spear nor arrow nor sword, and never shamed their leader in the day of conflict. He is said to have been present at Arthur's coronation at Caerlleon-upon-Usk, and, in the impossible story of Arthur's expedition against the Romans, he is stated to have served in the engagement in which the Emperor Lucius was vanquished and slain. It was his son Cystennin (Constantine) who succeeded to Arthur's sceptre. In the *Morte Darthur* frequent mention is made of Cador; and a doubtful compliment is paid him in Taliesin's poem entitled the *Glaswawd*:

> He will spare no kindred,
> Neither cousin nor brother;
> At the sound of Kadwr's horn
> Nine hundred are stunned.

In some versions of the adventure Tegau was already Caradoc's wife when she allured the serpent from his arm. It seized on one of her breasts, and she lost the nipple when the beast was cut off. The defect was made good with gold; hence she was ever afterwards known as Tegau Eurvron, or Tegau of the Golden Breast. Traditions of flying snakes, it is said, were once to be met with all over Wales; and these imaginary creatures were supposed to have drunk the milk of a woman or partaken of housel bread, whereupon they were turned into winged serpents or dragons.

VI

Cardinham

The story of Geraint and Enid must be familiar to very many through Tennyson's idyll, commencing:

> The brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
> A tributary Prince of Devon, one
> Of that great Order of the Table Round,
> Had married Enid, Yniol's only child, etc.

The tale of Geraint the son of Erbin may be found also

in the Mabinogion, and under the title of *Erec et Enide* forms the subject of one of Chrétien's poems.

In Welsh tradition Geraint is given to Cornwall. It is there that his father dwells, and thither he takes his bride, the lovely daughter of Earl Ynywl. Now Chrétien speaks of the marriage as being solemnised at Cardigan, where Arthur was holding his court, only in his version the bridegroom is named Erec instead of Geraint. To the same place Lancelot brings his newly-wed Iblis, and there, by the consent of all, she is awarded the Mantle of Chastity. This episode, by the way, comes from a German translation by Ulrich von Zalzekhoven of a late twelfth-century French poem which has been lost.

It would be natural to suppose that in every case Cardigan in Wales is intended, but in Welsh Keredigion is the name of the territory—Cardiganshire; the town is known as Aber Teivi (Teivi's mouth). At what period Aber Teivi came to be called Cardigan it is not easy to state, but it can hardly be doubted that the former name is the more ancient. This circumstance may well give rise to the suspicion that the Welsh town is not the place to which the romances point.

Arthur and Geraint are both so closely connected with Cornwall in old-world story that Mr. E. G. B. Phillimore fixed upon Cardinham, a considerable earthwork about five miles from Bodmin, as the true Cardigan. Old Cardinham, situated on the edge of Cardinham Moor, can now only show a lonely farmhouse, behind which is the earthwork with its partially destroyed rampart. "The small but well-protected enclosure," writes Mr. Dickinson, "seems to have been better fitted for a fortified residence than a resort for an army. It may conceivably have held the residential quarters of a Cornish chieftain in the sixth century, and its legendary associations with Arthur may not impossibly have had some foundation in fact."

The name Caradigan of Ulrich's poem is thought by Mr. Phillimore to represent Caradignan, of which Cardinham would be a not unlikely corruption. But the actuality

of this middle term is highly questionable. Although "Cardinham" has quite a Saxon look, it is almost certainly a Celtic name in disguise. The first syllable is the familiar *caer* (a fortress) and the remainder is a misspelling of *dinam*, which, as Professor Rhys points out, is not unknown as a place-name in Wales. Thus we have Llan-Dinam in Montgomeryshire, and two or three places called Dinam in Anglesey. The learned professor was not much opposed to Mr. Phillimore's localisation of "Caradigan," but it must be owned that his derivation of the name "Cardinham" deals a heavy blow at that gentleman's theory. To make it satisfactory in a philological *rapport*, we need a *g* where the *n* stands; and, apart from philology, what is there in it? The "legendary associations," of which Mr. Dickinson speaks, appear to depend on the identity of Cardinham with the Cardigan of the romances. Folklore is silent, or rather, it may be said, shifts the scene to the old earth-round of Castle-an-dinas, near St. Columb, Arthur's traditional hunting-seat. Hence, it is averred, he sallied to chase the wild deer on Tregoss Downs.

VII

Lyonnesse

One small item of Cornish folklore deserves perhaps more attention than is usually accorded to it. On Gwenvor Sands, in Whitsand Bay, at the Land's End, there landed, according to tradition, a body of foreigners who fought a great battle with the natives on Vellan-drucher Moor. "Where Madron, Gulval and Zennor meet," writes Bottrell, "there is a flat stone where Prince Arthur and four British kings dined, and the four kings collected the native Cornish who fought under them at the battle of Vellan-drucher." These foreigners are supposed to have been red-haired Danes, who stayed so long "that the birds built in the rigging of their ships," and they left descendants in certain

red-haired families, with whom the western peasantry would not intermarry.

The affair is said to have occurred long before the visit of the "Spanyers" to the same place in 1595, when they came ashore from a galley, "high by day," and burnt a mill called Vellan-dreath. Assuming this to be true, may not the invaders have been Picts or Gaels? May not their captain have been Mordred? And may not the conflict have been Arthur's last?

> So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
> Among the mountains by the winter sea,
> Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
> Had fall'n in Lyonnesse about their lord,
> King Arthur.

Now Lyonnesse was the heritage of Sir Tristram, and reference to the eighth book of the *Morte Darthur* shows that Malory thought of it either as in Cornwall or as contiguous to Cornwall. It was independent of King Mark, as Tristram's father, Meliodas, was also a king. There is no real contradiction here. Even nowadays the Cornish sometimes speak of "going to England," although there is no separate jurisdiction. If tradition may be believed, the old country of Lyonnesse is submerged by the sea. Between the Land's End and the Isles of Scilly lay a tract of land whereon the inhabitants had reared no fewer than one hundred and forty churches as well as a great city, the site of which is now marked by certain rocks known as Seven Stones. This fair and flourishing region was engulfed by the sea, and of all the inhabitants only one man is said to have escaped alive—an ancestor of the Trevilians. Day by day he had observed the sea making dangerous inroads, and had taken the precaution of removing his wife and children to a place of security farther inland. When at length the flood burst upon Lyonnesse, he was borne by his horse into a cove at Perran. "Old fishermen of a past generation," writes Miss Courtney, "used to declare that on clear days and moonlight nights they had often seen under water the roofs of churches,

houses, etc., of this submerged district"—a bold statement that attests the strength of the tradition.

The terrible calamity is not all imaginary, since the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle makes mention of a "high tide" as occurring on 11 November, 1090, which seems to have left its mark on the configuration of the coast. But the destruction of Lyonnesse, if real, is likely to have been gradual. To cite Miss Courtney again: "Folklore speaks of a time when Scilly was joined to the mainland, which does not seem very improbable when we remember that within the last twenty-five years a high-road and a field have been washed away by the sea between Newlyn and Penzance. An old lady, whose memory went back to the beginning of the present century [the nineteenth], told me that she had often seen boys playing at cricket in some fields seaward of Newlyn, of which no vestige in my time remained." Reference may be made also to the church of Perranzabuloe, about eight miles from Truro, supposed for centuries to be mythical, but disclosed by the shifting of the sand in 1835.

In the index of the Globe edition of the *Morte Darthur* Sir Edward Strachey inserts the following note:

"Liones, sometimes said to be a supposed tract of country called Lyonnesse, between the Land's End and the Scilly Isles, now submerged. But more probably St. Pol de Leon in Brittany is meant."

That may be the opinion of the editor, but it is absolutely irreconcilable with the statement of his author that Sir Tristram "made him ready to *ride* into Cornwall" (Book VIII. chap. v.), whereas he "sailed into Brittany" (Book VIII. chap. xxxv.).

VIII

The Scilly Isles

Accepting the hypothesis of a lost Lyonnesse, it would seem reasonable to regard the archipelago of Scilly as its relics and farthest bounds. It has, however, been mooted that Scilly is the country of Surluse so often named in the *Morte Darthur*. When Malory talks of a "country," he assuredly does not mean specks of land, but a territory ample enough to have towns and castles on it, as Lyonnesse had. Attempts to identify Scilly with Surluse seem to us hopeless, but it is not for that reason outside the pale of Arthurian geography. Readers of Malory will recollect that when Sir Marhaus arrived to claim the truage of maidens for the King of Ireland, it was agreed between him and Sir Tristram, as the champion of Cornwall, "that they should fight within an island nigh Sir Marhaus's ships." Now if we turn to *Erec et Enide*, line 1248, we learn, what Malory has not told us, the name of the island.

"Even Tristan, when he slew fierce Morhot on Saint Sanson's, awakened no just jubilee as they celebrated here over Erec." (Evans's Trans.)

St. Samson's is one of the Scilly Isles, two of the most eastern of which are known as the Great and the Little Arthur.

IX

Gerrans

We return to Geraint ab Erbin. The Cornish hero seems to have been canonised, and a church is said to have been dedicated to him at Caerffawydd, or Hereford. This honour may have been paid him on account of circumstances recorded in the Life of St. Teiliaw, second Bishop of Llandaff. Assuming that the Gerennius mentioned in that narrative is the gallant prince whom a famous Welsh elegy

represents as slain at Llongborth, "slaughtering his foes as he fell," the two accounts of his death cannot be reconciled.

The story is that St. Teiliaw was on his way to Armorica, fleeing the Yellow Plague by which the inhabitants of Britain were being decimated. Arriving in Cornwall, the saint met with a kind welcome from the king, to whom, ere he departed, he gave assurance that he should not die without being first houselled by him. Some time afterwards, Teiliaw received a mysterious intimation that King Geraint was drawing near his end, and at once arranged to redeem his promise and return home, when the pestilence had abated. When he was on the point of embarking, his attendants were ordered to take with them an immense sarcophagus in which the king's body was to be deposited. They protested that they were unable—so huge a coffer scarce ten yoke of oxen could move from its place. Teiliaw therefore exerted his miraculous power, and by Divine help the tomb floated across the sea before the ship's prow and reached the Cornish coast at a harbour named Dingerein. When the saint landed, Geraint was still alive, but after receiving the consecrated elements immediately gave up the ghost. His mortal remains were then placed, under the direction of the saint, in the sarcophagus before referred to.

By Dingerein is probably meant Gerrans, near Falmouth—a place which the Cornish antiquary Hals considered to have taken its name from Geraint. The Castle of Dingeraint (Cilgerran), on the River Teivi in Pembrokeshire, which is mentioned by the Welsh Chronicle as fortified in the twelfth century, is obviously less likely to be the locality.

Gerrans is about half a mile inland, between Falmouth and Fowey; and "Gerennius" is not forgotten there. In a field on a hill-top is an enormous gorse-covered mound which passes as his tomb, while his palace is said to have been at Tregurrel, the Place of Gold. According to tradition, the body was rowed thence across the bay in a golden

boat with silver oars; and the dead monarch was laid to rest with his crown on his head, and lying in his golden boat, with the silver oars alongside him. The barrow was opened in 1855, but all that was found was a kistvaen, or rude stone chest, containing ashes. Miss Courtney asserts that the palace of "Dingerein" was in the village of Gerrans, and that there had been discovered in a field, when it was being ploughed, a subterranean passage believed to have led from the village to the sea.

X

Cornish Legends

About a mile and a half from Tintagel is St. Knighton's Kieve with its beautiful waterfall. Concerning this natural sanctuary, Mr. G. Cuming Walters has a tale to tell which he gives as a genuine Cornish legend, but its antiquity may well be doubted. He thus writes:

"If we were to adhere strictly to Malory's narrative, we should say that the quest for the Holy Grail began at Camelot. Local tradition, however, is privileged to depart from written records, and it happens that in this case the scene is transferred to this spot, near King Arthur's birthplace. We are asked to believe that the knights, standing with bowed heads in the Kieve, undertook to search for the Holy Vessel of the Last Supper brought by Joseph of Arimathea to this land, the Cup that had been hidden and lost, and was destined to be discovered only by the pure and perfect knight. The king, standing on the bridge of rock above the torrent, watched his reverent followers in the stream below laving their brows in its waters, listening to the music of the fall, and, full of the inspiration of the scene, making their solemn vows, and with a firm desire after righteousness, setting forth upon the quest."

Mr. Walters has made the most of anything he may have been told of the gorge, and, if the tradition is authentic,

it is probably unique in Cornwall as preserving the memory of the Quest. To render the story complete, Mr. Walters adds, "To this very spot, too, if legend be true, the knights who had failed returned."

Not far away is Pentargon Cove, into which Mr. Baring-Gould, we believe, is disposed to read the name "Arthur," but this seems most improbable.

According to a tradition, among the slain in the battle of Camlan was Cador, half-brother, or, as he is sometimes described, nephew, of King Arthur. The same tradition affirms that Sir Cador, who, as "Kadwr," is glorified in the Welsh Triads, and who in the *Dream of Rhonabwy* is named "the Earl of Cornwall, whose duty it is to arm the king on the days of battle and warfare," lies buried beneath a large barrow between the Camel and the sea, about three miles from Camelford. This mound, which looks down on the Atlantic from a height of more than a thousand feet, is known as Cadon Barrow.

About seven miles from the legendary battlefield is another mound, which goes by the name of the Giant's Grave or King Arthur's Grave. It lies within Warbstowe Bury, one of the largest of the British camps in Cornwall, which is enclosed with a double rampart. There is no reason why this mound should be connected with Arthur, and the same remark will apply to the so-called King Arthur's Bed, which lies on a ridge a few miles north of Liskeard. This is an immense block of granite, the upper surface of which has been hollowed out by wind and rain into somewhat the shape of a coffin. The word "Bed" may signify "Grave" (Welsh *bedd*, as in Beddgelert), but it is just as likely to be used in the ordinary sense, and to be due to popular fancy.

DEVON AND DORSET

I

"Dyfnaint"

In the present county of Devon there are few, if any, localities distinctly Arthurian; nevertheless Devon, as a whole, is an extremely important province of "King Arthur's Country." In its widest sense the term covers the whole of what has been judged by competent authorities to have been his proper domain. From statements adduced in the foregoing section, it is evident that Welsh writers did not recognise the boundary that now exists between Devon and Cornwall. Gelliwic is sometimes said to be in Devon, sometimes in Cornwall. Geraint is called in one place a Cornish prince, in another a Prince of Devon. Why is that?

The Celtic name for Devon is "Dyfnaint," which, says Professor Rhys, "appears to represent a form like Dumnontiorum, a genitive which occurs in one of the MSS. of the Antonine Itinerary." The same scholar points out that there were two Dumnoniæ, or Devons, one in the north and the other in the south of Britain. With the former we are not here concerned. With respect to the southern Dumnonia, its limits have formed the subject of a careful study by the Rev. W. P. Greswell, who would make them extend from Oxbridge in Somerset to Fowey in Cornwall.

The *Chronicle* of Richard of Cirencester sets forth that "the Dumnonii were the most powerful people in those parts, on which account Ptolemy assigns to them all the country extending into the sea like an arm." Dr. Giles considers that this description denotes Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and part of Somerset, but Lappenberg, in his *England under the Saxon Kings*, makes Dumnonia at its

amplest even wider. He writes: "In the south-west we meet with the powerful territory of Dumnonia, the kingdom of Arthur. Dumnonia at a later period was limited to Dyvnaint, or Devonshire, by the separation of Cernon, or Cornwall. The districts called by the Saxons that of the Sumorsætas, the Dornsætas and the Wiltsætas were lost to the Kings of Dyvnaint at an early period."

From what may be termed the dawn of history Dumnonia was constantly shrinking, but if we may rely on Richard of Cirencester, the Dumnonian race never occupied the whole of Cornwall. The northern coast of the peninsula, as far as the Land's End, was the heritage of the Cornabii, or Cornish, who gave their name to the district.

These indications will help us to understand why, in Welsh usage, "Dyfnaint" is a comparatively vague expression. The fact, however, that Devon has retained the name, and its central position relatively to Somerset and Cornwall, suggest that it was the heart of the Dumnonian empire, whose capital city was within its confines. As Mr. Greswell remarks, "apparently the chief town of the Dumnonii was Isca Dumnoniorum, i.e. Exeter, a kind of Dumnonian metropolis."

"Dyfnaint" seems to have been for a considerable period under the sway of a dynasty of princes named Geraint. The earliest of these warrior-kings of whom we find mention fell in battle with the Saxons—it has been conjectured about the year 530; and the venerable bard Llywarch Hên composed in his honour an elegy which included the following lines:

Before Geraint, the terror of the foe,
I saw steeds fatigued with the toil of battle,
And after the shout was given, how dreadful was the onset.

At Llongborth I saw the tumult,
And the slain drenched in gore,
And red-stained warriors from the assault of the foe.

Before Geraint, the scourge of the enemy,
I saw steeds white with foam,
And after the shout of battle, a fearful torrent.

At Llongborth I saw the raging of slaughter,
And an excessive carnage,
And warriors bloodstained from the assault of Geraint.

At Llongborth was Geraint slain,
A valiant warrior from the woodlands of Devon,
Slaughtering his foes as he fell.

Llongborth, the Haven of Ships, is supposed by some to be Portsmouth, but there is perhaps better reason for believing it to be Langport, in Somerset. This question, however, may be deferred.

The hero of Llongborth is generally assumed to be Geraint ab Erbin, of whom we have spoken in the previous chapter. There appears to have been a younger Geraint, also contemporary with Arthur—Geraint Carnwys or Garwys, the "Geryn Erl of Carcoys" of Robert of Gloucester. Finally there was the Geraint to whom Aldhelm, first Bishop of Sherborne, addressed a letter in 705. Dr. Guest observes that, in the days of this prince, "Domnonia, though stripped of half its provinces, must have been, both in power and dignity, the first of British Kingdoms"; and the style of Aldhelm's epistle fully confirms this supposition. It is addressed "to the most glorious lord of the western kingdom, whom—He that searches hearts and weighs our actions is my witness—I love with brotherly affection; to King Gerontius," etc. Four years later, as we learn from the Saxon Chronicle, "Ine and Nun, his kinsman, fought against Geraint, King of the Weala," in a battle which is thought to have taken place on the crest of the Blackdown Hills. After a stubborn conflict, the King of Dyfnaint was defeated, and he and those with him turned their faces from the English, leaving their arms and spoils to the pursuers.

Professor Sir John Rhys calls attention to an interesting circumstance which, so to speak, brings this late fighting within the range of our subject. "A Welsh poem," he writes, "in a manuscript of the twelfth century, describing the feats of valour of the Dumnonian Prince Geraint in a battle fought probably with Ine of Wessex,

speaks of Geraint's men as the men of Arthur; this was a long while, be it marked, after the time when Arthur lived." It was the ideal Arthur—the Arthur of a glorious past and no less glorious future—of whom the poet was thinking; and in that sense he continued to reign over his old dominions on both sides of the Severn—not "Dyfnaint" alone.

"The outlines of the Arthurian realm," writes Mr. Greswell, "if it had its heart and life-blood anywhere, had it up the valleys of the Usk and Parret, at Caerleon and at Glastonbury. The kingdom of 'Rex Arthurus' was essentially a sea kingdom, and lived in the mouths of men along the coasts and the ports of the Celtic race."

Here we may find an explanation of the complete eclipse of Arthur in Devon, but, in seeking for reasons, we must not overlook the conquest of Devonshire by Athelstan, who made the Tamar its boundary, and the consequent uprooting of the Cornish language, which until that time must have continued to be spoken at Exeter and elsewhere. Devonshire, in fact, became the most English of English counties, and one in which the Saxon tongue long preserved its purity. Giraldus Cambrensis remarks on this trait. "In the southern parts of England," he says, "and particularly in Devonshire (Dumnonia), the English language bears more marks of antiquity, and adheres more strictly to the original language and ancient mode of speaking."

This was not a soil in which legends of Welsh Arthur could be expected to flourish, and all that can be gleaned by patient research is Dr. Guest's confident, but wholly unlikely, assumption that "Cair Lion," the scene of Arthur's ninth battle, was Exeter—that and the ancient dike on the Blackdown Hills, with its ditch always to the north, still traceable in parts. Truly a sparse harvest!

II

Badbury Rings

If Devon is barren of Arthurian legends, Dorset is in much the same case. Seeing that it was already Wessex when Devon was still Dyfnaint and under the governance of a native prince, there is no room for surprise at this lack of traditions. A generation or two ago Dorset would have been entirely outside the sphere of Arthurian interest and discussion. If it now enters the charmed circle, it is mainly on account of the supposed identity of Badbury Rings, near Wimborne, with the *Mons Badonicus*, where Arthur won his twelfth and crowning victory. To the uninitiated, Bath, in Somerset, might seem a more probable site; and in former days no other explanation would have been conceived possible. Even now this view has not been completely abandoned by scholars.

It was Dr. Guest who proposed Badbury Rings as a superior alternative, and this conjecture proved more felicitous than his "Cair Lion" guess, inasmuch as it received the important endorsement of Professor Freeman. In many other quarters it is accepted as in full accord with historical likelihood.

The reasonableness of this opinion greatly depends on the truth or falsehood of the theory that Arthur was the opponent of Cerdic, the valiant founder of the West Saxon Kingdom. Landing at the mouth of the Itchen in 495, he defeated the British leader Natanleod at Netley in 508, and gained a still more brilliant victory over the Britons at Charford, near Fordingbridge, in 519. Something then occurred to check the advance of the invaders in a westerly direction, and that may have been the battle or siege of Mount Badon, which, according to Gildas, was disastrous for the Saxons.

Gildas, however, states—and he claims to be sure—that the event occurred just forty-four years and a month after the landing of "our cruel foes"—referring, presumably, to

the arrival of Hengist and Horsa in 449. This chronology introduces a disturbing factor into the reconstruction of this period of history, and doubt is cast on the date of the battle as usually given—520. Still, the fact remains that Cerdic, instead of pursuing a victorious march westward, found it more profitable to turn his attention to the Isle of Wight; and that, after his day, the progress of Saxon arms was slow. One hundred and forty years elapsed before Cenwealh vanquished the Britons in the decisive battle of Peuselwood, on the Somerset border.

The name Badbury does not occur at Wimborne alone. There are fields called Badbury at Poyntington in Somerset; and there is a Badbury in Wiltshire. The latter has been suggested as the scene of Arthur's victory, but Badbury Rings must submit to be challenged by more serious rivals—Bath, and Bowden Hill in Scotland. There are barrows at Badbury Rings, adding to the probability that the first syllable of the name signifies "graves."

III

Corfe Castle

That Corfe Castle has any genuine connection with King Arthur we do not for a moment believe. It is famous as the place where King Edward the Martyr was put to death by his stepmother Elfrida, and any legends circulating in the neighbourhood that involve royalty may possibly refer to him or, more probably, to incidents in the Civil War, when Lady Bankes held the castle for six weeks against *the king*. Quite by chance, however, we met with a story which is worth quoting, inasmuch as it illustrates the facility with which Arthurian fables may arise even in modern times. The story is told in Mr. J. C. Minchin's *Old Harrow Days*, where he thus writes:

"One does not go for geography or accuracy to a great poet, and therefore a Dorsetshire man must not complain

that Tennyson has laid the scenes of his Arthurian legends, not in Dorsetshire, as he should have done, but in Cornwall. An old schoolfellow, a highly imaginative and poetical Harrow boy, devoted a holiday to working out on the spot, by the aid of the *Morte Darthur* and other ancient volumes, the life and death of our famous sovereign. He trod every foot between St. Aldhelm's Head and Strudland Bay.

"To enable him to carry out his poetical and archæological investigations the better, a relation of his took the shooting around Corfe Castle. He was accompanied by two younger boys from another public school. One afternoon my friend, lulled by sound of 'bees' industrious murmur,' fell asleep on Barrow Down. He was awakened by an odd sound. It was the charge of cavalry. On such a spot, looking over King's Mere and the King's Stables, and with the graves of Arthur's knights all around him, what cavalry could they be but the ghostly chivalry of Britain's warrior king? My old schoolfellow said nothing about his discovery to his younger friends. One day, however, they came and told him that, sleeping out on the same burial ground—the Barrow Down—they too had been awakened by the charge of cavalry through the glades of the forest. But these boys had been more favoured than my friend, for the charge had been followed by the grandest burst of music they had ever heard in their lives. They described the music as like nothing earthly, unless it was the massed bands of all the Guards' regiments playing together.

"My friend, being a Highlander, listened to this narrative with wonder and awe. It was clear to him that he was unworthy to hear this heavenly music. The charge of the king's cavalry alone reached his grosser ears. His friends, by their more perfect innocence, were kept 'in tune with Heaven,' and heard that music of which Shakespear tells us that:

> Such harmony is in immortal souls,
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

"That there was any physical cause for these beautiful sounds no more entered my friend's mind than it occurred to any Dorsetshire bumpkin, who avoided the glades of Barrowdown Forest as manifestly haunted.

"It so happened that my friend was related to Professor Tyndall. It is not often that a Harrovian, past or present, can put his mental troubles before a Governor and ask him to solve them. . . .

"The Professor explained how under the waters of the Bay of Biscay there was a stratum of limestone, and that this limestone was immediately connected with a 'fault' in the cliffs of limestone on which Barrow Down was perched. He explained that the sounds which were known in the neighbourhood as 'the King's Cavalry' and 'the King's Music' were simply the result of the waves of the Bay of Biscay beating on the limestone basin with which the cliffs of Dorset were in direct telephonic communication. It was for this reason that 'the King's Cavalry' would charge and 'the King's Music' would play always before a storm in the Bay of Biscay."

Thus did the man of science demolish the germ of a legend which, in a less enlightened but more imaginative age, would have developed into a local possession. As we shall discover, the passage of Arthur's chivalry has been heard elsewhere in what may be termed a more natural setting.

SOMERSET

I

"Camelot"

In quitting Dorset for the twin county of Somerset, we pass, as it were, from a famine-stricken region to a land of plenty. Perhaps nowhere else in Britain can be found such a wealth of Arthurian legends as in Gwlad yr Hâv, the Summer Country of the Welsh naming, for here, if steadfast tradition does not err, are Camelot and Avalon, with which Caerlleon alone can vie in greatness of Arthurian fame.

Cadbury, with which Camelot of old stands identified, is a place so obscure that it is requisite to define its geographical position with more than ordinary precision. There is, in point of fact, more than one Cadbury. On a commanding height, overlooking the valley of the Exe, some four miles below Tiverton, in Devonshire, is an earthwork of that name, and there is another near Yatton in the north of Somerset. Apparently, through sheer inadvertence, a usually well-informed writer has made the Yatton fortalice his Camelot and wasted a considerable gift of word-painting in describing the impressive scenery. To preclude any similar mistakes in the future, it is advisable to state that the Cadbury Camp traditionally associated with Arthur is in South Somerset and in the parish of South Cadbury. It is about five miles north of Sherborne and four miles and a half south of Castle Cary.

Much gratitude is due to the late Rev. J. A. Bennett for his researches into the history, folklore and topographical features of this ancient stronghold. His brochure is full of interesting particulars, many of which were

obtained on the spot and from the lips of a generation that has now passed away.

Before touching on other points, we may call attention to literary evidence showing the age and consistency of the tradition which has marked this British entrenchment as the Camelot of romance.

"They," writes Leland, "who dwell about the foot of Camelot love to celebrate, extol and sing the name of Arthur, once a dweller in the camp. That camp upon its mountain height was once magnificent and strong beyond all others. O ye gods! How vast the depth of the fosses! How wonderful the earthwork of its ramparts! How precipitous its slopes! It seems a very miracle of nature and of art. . . . Such are the vicissitudes of human things. On the one side Ilchester, that ancient city, on the other Sherborne, the busy mart, look upon it and bewail its fate."

In his *Itinerary*, the same writer informs us that within the memory of man "a horse-shoe of silver" had been found at "Camalot," and that many Roman coins, gold, silver and copper, had been ploughed up there. Camden too speaks of the castle hill of South Cadbury as Camelot. He describes it as "a steep mountain of very difficult ascent," and mentions that it was called by the inhabitants "Arthur's Palace."

Mr. Bennett does not cite Drayton, but in the third song of the *Polyolbion* may be found some significant lines, in which the poet refers to the River Ivel as

> The nearest neighbouring flood to Arthur's ancient seat,
> Which made the Briton's name through all the world so great.

He proceeds:

> Like Camelot what place was ever yet renown'd?
> Where, as at Caerleon, oft he kept the Table Round.

Last of all, we come to Shakespeare. In *King Lear* the Earl of Kent is made to exclaim:

> Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
> I'd drive you cackling home to Camelot.

Stow, Speed, Selden, Stukely and Musgrave are all in accord with the earlier topographers, and the two last furnish plans. By a curious perversion in the Elizabethan maps the name Camelot, or Camalet, is spelt Camalleck. Leland remarks that "divers villages thereabout bear the name of Camalet by an addition as Queen Camalet and other." This may have been so in Tudor times, but the final syllable is now dropped, and we meet with the forms Queen Camel, East Camel, and Camel Hill, the last in Yarlington, where the brook that runs by Cadbury Castle takes its rise.

Let us turn, in the next place, to some of the folklore so happily gathered by Mr. Bennett, who in his time was Rector of South Cadbury. He writes:

"The name of Arthur still lives in connection with our hill. One of its wells is called King Arthur's Well. And then we are told how, besides his monthly ride by moonlight around the entrenchments, King Arthur and his knights come riding down from Camelot to drink the waters of a spring beside Sutton Montis Church on the eve of every Christmas Day. It is rumoured also that, on the eve of St. John, anyone who ventures to ascend the hill will see something strange; exactly what I cannot say, for I do not know of anyone who has put it to the proof.

"In more prosaic and practical form the name of Arthur appears in connection with an early British road which, leaving Camelot by its western gate, trends away northward towards Glastonbury. This track is now almost lost, but even in my time it was a bridle-path, and it is evident that it is of early date, earlier than the time of the division of the land into parishes and manors as we have them now, for it has been taken as the boundary of several of them. To the present time this track is called King Arthur's Lane. The evidence of this slipped out one day by accident. When the digging of the day was done, and the tools were being gathered up, I happened to say to the labourer who was working for me, 'Which way are you going home?'

'Down King Arthur's Lane, sir,' he answered. It was the first time I had ever heard it so called, and it naturally led to further talk, and then he told me that at home (his home was about two miles off upon the line of this trackway) he sometimes, on rough winter's nights, heard King Arthur and his hounds go by along the track."

With the help of a labourer who was born in the parish, Mr. Bennett was laying bare the foundations of a hut-dwelling on the little tableland, and the first-fruits of his industry were some fragments of pottery and half of a large quern, or handmill. The rustic was sadly perplexed at the latter object, but as soon as its use was explained to him his countenance brightened, and he observed: "Now I see what I could never make out afore—what the fairies wanted with carrying corn up here out of Foreside." ("Foreside" was an arable field below.)

The fairies, however, had abandoned both the practice and the hill. "The fairies," said a venerable parishioner, "were obliged to leave when the bells were put into the church, and they left all their gold behind them, and it is a pity our squire won't dig into the hill, for there is lots of gold in it, and folks do say that on the night of the full moon King Arthur and his men ride round the hill, and their horses are shod with silver, and a silver shoe has been found in the track where they do ride, and when they have ridden round the hill, they stop to water their horses at the Wishing Well."

In the course of the excavations before referred to, Mr. Bennett and his assistant dug to the bottom of the hut, which was formed by a large rough flagstone. A blow with the pick-axe produced a hollow sound, which threw the labourer into a frenzy of excitement. "Here it is, sir!" he exclaimed. "What?" queried the parson. "We have found the way in now," was the reply.

With a mighty effort the man heaved away the stone, only to find that beneath it lay another stone of similar size and pattern. Palpably disappointed, he proceeded to detach the second stone, when his disillusionment became

complete. Like most of his neighbours, he had a profound belief in the existence, somewhere in the bowels of the mystic hill, of certain wondrous caverns approached by iron gates; and he had fondly dreamed that he was on the verge of a grand discovery, and would be the first to ascertain the whereabouts of the vanished portal about which there were conflicting opinions.

One parishioner maintained that the famous iron gates were to be found among the entrenchments on the western slope, and beside the old British roadway into the fortress. She remembered how her father used to tell her that, when a boy, he had seen the upper corner of the iron durns and the corner of an iron door there. The rival view also located them by an original entrance-way, where only the expert eye of a trained archæologist would have been likely to detect the ancient roadway. For two hundred and fifty years at least the fortified upper portion of the hill has been enclosed by a wall, outside which every vestige of the road has been entirely effaced by the plough. Inside, however, the hollow ground, in which ash-trees have been planted, sufficiently defines the lie of the road.

One day Mr. Bennett was sitting by the fireside of an old cottager, when the former remarked, "I wonder where those iron gates are, Mesh?" Without a moment's hesitation the reply came: "Why, don't ee know, sir? Up among they ash-trees."

To judge from Mr. Bennett's paper, there is a disappointing lack of cohesion between the iron gates of the hollow hill, the fairies' hoard of gold and King Arthur. An anonymous poet (cited by Mr. H. St. George Gray) has attempted to correlate the *disjecta membra* of local tradition, and the resultant whole is a vivid reminder of Arthurian legends to be found elsewhere. Of course, the iron gates go by the board; only *golden* gates are worthy of the cultivated Muse.

The green woods clothe the summit now; the green grass o'er it spreads;
On golden flowers of Autumn Stars the village maiden treads,
But knows that far beneath her feet, within the caverned hill,

King Arthur and his mail-clad knights are soundly sleeping still,
With golden lamps reflected in polished marble floors,
And ever-watchful dragons guarding the golden doors.
She knows that they who ne'er have sinned, nor caused a heart
to grieve,
Whose faith is firm, and love is true, who kneel on St. John's Eve
And lave their eyes in Arthur's Well, shall see the hill subside,
The passage open at their feet, the golden gates divide,
And Arthur couched amid his knights, each girded with his sword;
And by the trancèd monarch's head a priceless jewel-hoard.

Leland, it will be remembered, refers to the unearthing of numerous Roman coins, especially "by East," where similar finds continue to be made. It is chiefly through these coins that the Roman occupation is established. One small fragment of Samian ware is said to have been met with, and one tile or brick, which may be Roman. Hence it is fair to conclude that the Romans had no permanent settlement here, and the fecundity of the hills in Roman coins is perhaps best explained by the supposition that the troops quartered at Ilchester, which is only five miles distant, availed themselves of the fort as a camping-ground in summer. Obviously, however, there are other ways of accounting for the deposits.

The final withdrawal of the Romans from Britain occurred A.D. 425–450, and if there is the least historical foundation for the Arthurian traditions, it must have been subsequent to that period and before the Saxons strengthened their hold on the country to the west of Salisbury Plain—an interval of more than two centuries—that Camelot, from being a mere hill-fort, arrived at the crown of its glory as the metropolis of a native kingdom, the rallying-point of all that was gay and gallant among the Britons, as well as their mightiest bulwark against the heathens who had come to stay.

On this mount of Camelot, "the joyous court of knights and beauteous ladies of Arthur's day held high revelry."

'Twas to Camelot that the gentlest and fairest lady, daughter of Leodegrance, King of the Land of Cameliard, was brought by Lancelot. 'Twas at Camelot that "the king was wedded unto Dame Guinivere in the Church of

St. Stephen with great solemnity"; and in the same church were buried the twelve kings who fell in the war with King Lot. 'Twas at Camelot that the knights were charged by Merlin to sit still whilst he displayed to them "the strange and marvellous adventure" of the White Hart; at Camelot that Gawain was put to confusion after he had deceived Pelleas and Ettarde, and at Camelot, in the Church of St. Stephen, that the archbishop pronounced his blessing on the enterprises of the king and his knights assembled to receive it. Hard by Camelot, Tristram and Lancelot "fought together unknown and either wounded other wonderly sore that the blood ran out upon the grass"; then, learning the truth, gave up their swords, kissed each other a hundred times — and rode by to Camelot.

In the *Holy Grail*, Percivale paints Camelot as a mysterious, dreamlike city somewhat after the style of Oxford if it had been set on a hill:

> O brother, had you known our mighty hall,
> Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!
> For all the sacred Mount of Camelot,
> And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,
> Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
> By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook,
> Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built.

It is interesting to compare this beautiful vision with the stark reality as it presents itself to-day.

Very steep are the sides of Camelot, and those who in days of yore devoted themselves to the task of fortifying it, displayed no common skill and judgment in arranging their lines so as to employ to the full every advantage afforded by the nature of the ground. The summit consists of a tolerably level area about twenty acres in extent, the greatest length being from east to west, and on either side is a gentle declivity. The boundary of the small plateau is a mound some eight or ten feet at its highest, but its circuit is much broken, and having been infested for ages with hordes of rabbits, has lost, and is still

continually losing, in altitude. Its original height cannot even be conjectured.

Measured on the outside, the rampart at its highest point is about fifty yards from the bottom of its fosse; and the face of the hill has been scarped or pared away so as to be almost perpendicular. Where the rock crops out, it is quite perpendicular. Below are two other escarpments, each with its ditch; and below them again is a fourth rampart, still in places some fifty feet high, which has no ditch, the earth at the bottom sloping away from the outer face of the escarpment. All round the hill these fortifications may be observed, exhibiting but slight differences. Towards the eastern end, however, they are more strongly defined, and the lowest rampart, in particular, has been constructed with peculiar care, so as to compensate for the weakness of the ground and make doubly sure against assault, more likely to be attempted on this side than on any other.

Lower than the lowest of the ramparts are a number of lynches or terraces, which on the northern side of the hill are extremely imperfect, but on the southern side form a wide stairway from the base of the fortifications to the stream at the bottom of the hill. Both these and similar lynches on neighbouring hillsides have been under the plough, and this, it is believed, is the purpose for which they were converted into planes. In another clime they might have been used as vineyards, and it is not certain that this was not the case here, for there is ample evidence that the vine was cultivated in Somerset in mediæval times, if not earlier.

The fall of Camelot is supposed to have resulted from the crushing defeat of the Britons by Cenwealh. The Saxon Chronicle thus records the event: "A.D. 658. In this year Cenwealh fought against the Welsh at Peonna, and put them to flight as far as Pedrida" (i.e. the River Parret). After that Camelot, if not taken, would have become untenable. The precise location of Peonna is of no importance to us here—Mr. Bennett favours Poyntington—for the

salient fact is that the Saxons now penetrated to the rear of the fortress and severed the lines of communication with it.

Nennius states that Arthur's eleventh battle was on Mount Breguoin, also called Cat Bregion; and Camden suggests that Cadbury may be intended. Dr. Guest deems this at least possible, since he glosses "or Agned Cathregonium, Cadbury, in Somersetshire; or Edinburgh." Taking this as his cue, Mr. Bennett indulges in some wild theorisings. "If so," he writes, "Cenwealh (!) was beaten once, when the prize was within sight, to return and fight a second time. One cannot but be struck, too, with the close similarity between our local names Camelot, Camel and Camlan, or Kemelen, the name given to Arthur's twelfth victory, where he was wounded to the death and carried off to the Isle of Avalon, only fifteen miles from Camelot, to die and to be buried there."

Mr. Bennett's enthusiasm causes him to display less than his usual care. Though Arthur is said by some to have lived to be a centenarian, it is evident that he could not have been fighting Cerdic in 520 and Cenwealh in 658. But Mr. Bennett appears to suppose that the battle of Badon, or Badbury Rings, also occurred about the latter date. This, by the way, not that of Camlan, was Arthur's twelfth victory. Not to insist on this trifling error, the similarity of the names which Mr. Bennett notes is certainly curious, and if his notion contradicts Geoffrey of Monmouth and other authorities cited in our first section, it receives some countenance from Malory.

It seems strange that Malory should describe the meeting-place both as "beside Salisbury" and as "not far from the sea-side," since the veriest tyro knows that Salisbury is a considerable distance inland. But suppose that the low-lying parts of Somerset were flooded by a tidal overflow and more or less permanently under water—a by no means improbable hypothesis—then we obtain conditions exactly in keeping with the narrative. It has been objected to the traditional account which localises Arthur's last battle in

Cornwall and his last refuge at Glastonbury, that three or four delicate ladies could not have rowed the wounded king through the choppy waters of the Bristol Channel; nor, it may be added, *a fortiori*, could they have rowed him from the shore of the English Channel nearest Salisbury round the Land's End to the mouth of the Brue, and thence half-way across Somerset to Glastonbury. But once grant the existence of an inland lake, and how simple everything becomes! The barque might have glided softly and securely over its smooth and crystal surface, and the voyage would not have been long.

II

Glastonbury—Pomparles

If Glastonbury be indeed "the island-valley of Avilion," the physical conditions of the surrounding country must have been of the character that we have just indicated. But postponing any further discussion of that question, let us notice an interesting tradition recorded by Leland which places the scene of Arthur's farewell in the immediate neighbourhood of Glastonbury.

Leland's statement is as follows:

"*Briwetun* River cummith from *Briwetun* x. miles of to the West Part of the Town of *Glessenbyri* and so rennith to the Mere a 2. miles lower. Or ever the River cum to *Glessenbyri* by a mile it cummith to a Bridge of Stone of a 4. arches communely called *Pontperlus*, wher men fable that Arture cast in his Swerd."

The tradition that Arthur's brand Excalibur was cast into the Brue is intelligible, since by all accounts it came to the king from that part of his realm. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's history Arthur's connection with Avalon is very slight. He mentions, however, that the monarch's sword Caliburn, a "very excellent sword," was forged in the Isle of Avalon. The record of Excalibur in the *Morte*

Darthur is confused or, perhaps we should say, subtle. Mr. Edward Hutton, in his *Highways and Byways of Somerset,* expresses the opinion that it was at Camelot that Arthur "first saw his sword Excalibur"—on the occasion of the council general and great jousts held in that city soon after the commencement of his reign. If so, it was brought to his court by a damsel in richly-furred mantle who had come on a message from the great Lady Lile of *Avelion.* It was as fatal a gift, in its way, as the Trojan horse. Only Balin, disguised as a poor knight, could draw the sword from its scabbard, and he promptly employed it to cut off the head of the Lady of the Lake from whom Arthur had previously received it. When, subsequently, Balin and his brother Balan had succeeded in killing each other, Merlin, by his subtlety, put the sword "in a marble stone standing upright as great as a millstone," and in that casing it floated about in the water until, many years afterwards, "it swam down the stream to the city of Camelot."

Excalibur was the most elusive of weapons. Mr. Hutton is wrong in stating that Arthur's first sight of it was at Camelot, for ere this he had beheld it supported by an arm clothed in white samite in the midst of a lake, "the which was a fair water and broad," and on the invitation of the Lady of the Lake he had entered a yellow barge and, rowing himself to the sword, had taken it and the scabbard. In the twenty-first book of the *Morte Darthur* the Lady of the Lake, reported to have been slain by Balin, comes to life again. She is one of the four ladies in black hoods who were in the barge that transported Arthur to the vale of Avilion.

It seems natural to imagine that Excalibur was cast into the water where Arthur had gotten it, since "an arm and a hand" at once rose and caught it, just as "an arm and a hand" had given it from the bosom of the lake, and this can have been at no great distance from Camelot, to which city the Lady of the Lake rode on horseback to demand the head of the knight who had won the sword.

But was Balin's sword Excalibur? It would seem so, though the fact is not explicitly stated. Malory seldom is explicit in his reference to the sword. Thus we do not learn that the sword, by drawing which, in London, Arthur proved himself the lawful heir of Uther, was Excalibur until we come to the account of the king's first war, in which Merlin advises him: "Fight not with the sword that ye had by miracle till ye see that ye go unto the worse." When Arthur was smitten down by Lot, "then he drew his sword Excalibur," which was so bright that "it gave the light of thirty torches."

The miracle spoken of lay in the circumstance that the sword was enclosed in a great stone "like unto a marble stone," and it is a suggestive coincidence that Merlin placed Balin's sword in a marble stone after the death of that knight. In London Arthur alone could draw Excalibur from its sheath; at Camelot Balin only performed this feat with the "unhappy sword." The dialogue between Arthur and the Lady of the Lake clearly points to the identity of the two swords:

"'That is good sooth,' said Arthur, 'a gift I promised you, but I have forgotten the name of the sword that ye gave me.'

"'The name of it,' said the lady, 'is Excalibur, that is as much as to say as Cut-steel.'

"'Ye say well,' said the king, 'ask what ye will, and ye shall have it, and it be in my power to give it.'

"'Well,' said the lady, 'I ask the head of the knight that hath won the sword or else the damsel's head that brought it.'"

Excalibur was not constantly in Arthur's possession. At one time Accolon had it, and Arthur, by the kindness of his sister, Morgan le Fay, was furnished with a sham Excalibur.

Now, if we are right in the conclusion that Arthur's and Balin's swords were one and the same weapon, one of its properties appears to have been a tendency to return to Avalon, where it was made. When Merlin, who perhaps

made it and was certainly closely concerned with its adventures, had set another pommel on it before replacing it in the marble stone in which it swam to Camelot—"Then Merlin let make a bridge of iron and of steel into that island, and it was but half a foot broad, and there shall never man pass that bridge, nor have the hardiness to go over, but if he were a passing good knight without treachery or villainy. Also the scabbard of Balin's sword, Merlin left it on this side the island that Galahad should find it."

What island? Malory supplies no answer, but surely the island must be the Isle of Avalon—fifteen miles from Camelot. And the bridge? Pomparles, "wher men fable that Arture cast in his Swerd"—not, of course, the present structure, but a prehistoric predecessor, from which it derives its name.

The name Pomparles, which means the Bridge Perilous, is certainly mediæval. A local antiquary, Mr. John Morland, who has made a thorough study of the history of the bridge and of much besides that is of interest in the neighbourhood, has found satisfactory proofs of the antiquity of the name. In a document of about the year 1415 the bridge is described as *Pons Periculosus*, which has perhaps been corrupted into the present form by a process similar to that by which Pontefract becomes Pomfret, so far, at least, as the first syllable is concerned. As for the second syllable, the bridge figures as *Pons Perilis* in the list of county bridges, and as *Pons Perillons* in that of the sessions roll of 1763. An early corruption is "Pemperels."

Mr. Morland makes the very probable suggestion that the name was really of Romance rather than of Latin origin, though it was occasionally Latinised by mediæval scribes. There is frequent mention of "Sieges Perilous" in the old romances, and Malory speaks of a Castle Perilous, occupied by the Lady Liones, apparently near Avilion, but the expression *Pont Perilons* seems to occur but once—in the story of Sir Libeaus. Elsewhere, if we do not find the name, we meet with the thing. Mr. Morland is of

opinion that Pomparles was a name applied by the builders to the earliest stone bridge, and that it was borrowed from one of their favourite romances. It would not perhaps be an overbold conjecture that the favourite romance was Chrétien's *Conte de la Charette*. Anyhow, as we shall show, the monks were in the habit of appropriating stories that floated about in an atmosphere of pure romance and of localising them in the neighbourhood of the great abbey. Leland probably got the tale of King Arthur and Excalibur, directly or indirectly, from that source.

Of the bridge itself it is not needful to say much. The immediate forerunner of the present structure was built in 1826. The bridge displaced in that year, of which there is a vignette, was perhaps the original Pomparles. The county historian Phelps declares that it was an ancient stone bridge of two arches over the River Brue, and evidently a Roman work, being connected with the Via Strata leading to Ilchester. The vignette does not bear out the supposition that the bridge is Roman. Of the two arches the southern was semicircular, but the northern was pointed, and clearly, therefore, of later date. According to Mr. Bligh Bond, the former was probably twelfth-century, while the latter was two centuries younger.

III

Glastonbury—The Tor

The supposed identity of Glastonbury with the Isle of Avalon is an instance of what may be termed the materialisation of legend. For by the latter expression is undoubtedly meant the Celtic fairyland. Even so stolid a writer as Lydgate well understood that Arthur had been transported to a region which was the heathen counterpart of Paradise:

He is a King crownèd in Faërie,
With a sceptre and sword, and with his regalty
Shall resort as Lord and Sovereign
Out of Faërie and reign in Britain,
And repair again the Round Table,
Among princes King incomparable.

In this connection it is worthy of remark that Gwyn ab Nudd, who, says Mr. Rolleston, "impressed himself more deeply and lastingly on Welsh popular imagination than any of the other divinities," and later passed as King of the Tylwyth Teg, or Welsh fairies, has a link with Glastonbury. An incident related in the Life of St. Collen, a descendant of Caradawc Vreichvras and for a while Abbot of Glastonbury, attaches to the Tor, a striking landmark crowned by the tower—all that survives—of an ancient church or chapel dedicated to St. Michael.

In former days the Tor was under the sway of a fairy host and regarded by the heathen with superstitious awe. In order to combat the enemy and bring the enchanted spot under Christian rule, St. Collen repaired to Glastonbury and took up his abode in a cell at the foot of the hill. Whilst there he overheard two men discoursing, and their discourse was concerning Gwyn ab Nudd, who, they said, was King of the Fairies. The saint charged them to hold their peace, inasmuch as those they spake of were demons only, but they refused and said that he would be obliged to meet Gwyn ab Nudd face to face.

Not long afterwards Collen heard someone knock at his door, and was informed that Gwyn, King of Annwn (Hades), had sent a message requiring him to go at midday to the crest of the hill and there speak with him. Only after the message had been delivered thrice did Collen consent. He then consecrated some water, and thus fortified climbed to the hill-top. There he beheld the loveliest castle whereon he had ever cast eye, together with swarms of minstrels, young men and maidens; and all things were redolent of eternal youth and felicity.

When Collen entered the castle, the king, who sate on a golden throne, bade him welcome, and invited him to

partake of the exquisite fare prepared for him. The saint declined, whereupon the king asked whether he had ever seen men more handsomely attired than his attendants in their livery of red and blue.

"Their apparel is good enough of its kind," replied Collen.

"And pray what is its kind?" inquired the monarch.

"The red," answered the saint, "betokens burning, the blue an icy cold."

So saying, St. Collen sprinkled holy water on the company, and in a moment they all vanished away. Away, too, went king and castle, and nothing was left but tufts of grass. By such means was Gwyn, King of Hades, constrained to give place to St. Michael the Archangel, who ever after retained possession of the spot.

The derivation of the name Avalon is a subject of controversy. It has been connected with apples, as in a poem in Geoffrey's *Life of Merlin*,[1] which begins:

> *Insula pomorum, quæ fortunata vocatur,*
> *Ex re nomen habet.*

Orchards are still there; one adjoins the abbey enclosure, another may be found on Chalice Hill. According to another account the name comes from that of a British chief Avallo, Avalloc, or Avallach, who is said to have dwelt at Glastonbury with his two daughters. This solution commends itself to Sir John Rhys—with a difference. As he interprets, Avallonia or Ynys Avallach (the Isle of Avallach) implies a Celtic dark divinity who in process of time became forgotten or obscured, and then the apple theory was invented. The resemblance between the name of the latent god and that of King Evelake who delivered Joseph of Arimathea from prison is not perhaps without significance.

Meanwhile the apple theory cannot be considered as finally deposed. *Afal* is good Welsh for "apple," and *afallwyn* for "orchard," and, recollecting the Biblical narrative of the Fall, we are compelled to own that

[1] It is not certainly by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Avalon "fair with orchard lawns" is not a bad conception of Paradise.

Could we be sure that the name was supplied by the romances and the folklore of French-speaking Bretons, a very tempting derivation would be *avaler*, applied to the setting sun. A whole body of traditions for which we have not space places the home of the blessed dead in the west. Even now this conviction flourishes with unabated vigour among the unlettered peasants of Brittany, to whom the Boat of Souls is a vivid reality. In M. Anatole Le Braz's *A Summer Festival* we meet with the following passage: "Then thrice he sprinkled the face of the dead man, each time murmuring in a broken, quavering voice: '*Kerz gant doue inè paowr* (Go to God, poor soul!).' Leaning once more towards me Henri Laouénan whispered, 'But the soul is far away! It has long since reached the Land of the Setting Sun! Do you think so? You saw it fly off just as I did. God give it peace.'"

In the same writer's *Easter in Iceland* occurs the passage: "It was a strange, weird journey; I never think of it without a shudder. You have heard tell of the Boat of Souls —Last an Anaon—which may be seen gliding about our coasts at night, weighed down to the water's edge, whose passengers, when hailed, only answer by an 'Amen.'" (Gosling's Trans.)

Mention of Iceland reminds us of Scyld's ship-burial recorded in the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*. Those who desire to follow up the subject may be recommended to consult Mr. Hall's translation of Knut Stjerna's *Essays on Questions connected with the Old English Poem of Beowulf*, where the matter is discussed in all its bearings.

Apparently the oldest name by which Glastonbury was known is Ynyswytryn ("The Isle of Glass"). Freeman has a misgiving that this may be no more than a translation of *Glas*tonbury; "but," he adds, "it is just as likely that it is a real British name, having no more to do with glass than Glastonbury has, but on which that meaning was put by the same kind of etymological pun of which we have

many examples, and of which the turning of Jerusalem into Hierosolyma is a familiar case."

Assuming that Ynyswytryn means the Isle of Glass, it would be compounded of *ynys* (Gaelic *innis*, often corrupted in Scottish place-names into *inch*) and a word closely resembling the Welsh *wydr* or *gwydr* ("glass"). Giraldus Cambrensis explains the term as referring to the surrounding water in which the island would be mirrored.

Chrétien distinguishes between the "Isle de Voirre" and Avalon. The former he describes, in lines that strikingly remind one of Tennyson, as a happy land, the climate of which is perfect, and from which all noisome things are banished.

> Avec ces que m'oez nommer
> Vint Maheloas uns hauz ber,
> Le sire de l'isle de voirre.
> En cele isle n'ot l'en tonnoirre
> Ne n'i chiet foudre ne tempeste,
> Ne boz ne serpentz n'i areste.
> N'i fait trop chaut, ne n'i iverne.
>
> *Erec et Enide*, lines 1933–9.

Mr. Comfort translates:

"Along with those whom I have just mentioned came Mahelvas, a great baron, lord of the Isle of Voirre. In this island no thunder is heard, no lightning strikes, nor tempests rage, nor do toads or serpents exist there, nor is it ever too hot or too cold."

The next sentences read:

"Graislemier of Fine Posterne brought twenty companions, and had with him his brother Guigomar, lord of the Isle of Avalon. Of the latter we have heard it said that he was a friend of Morgan the Fay, and such he was in very truth."

Mahelvas is, of course, Melwas; and Morgan the Fay a sister of King Arthur, to whom the fairy-haunted Tor would naturally be a congenial resort. Evidently Chrétien was confused by the two names, Ynyswytryn and Avalon, and thought they referred to separate islands. It is noticeable that Malory also makes Guigomar (or, as he calls him, Sir Gringamore) lord of Avalon.

"When Dame Liones was come to the Isle of Avilion, that was the same isle thereas her brother Sir Gringamore dwelt, then she told him," etc. (Book VII. chap. xxvi.)

Malory has several allusions to Glastonbury, but nowhere affords any clear indication of its identity with Avalon or Avilion. Apparently both he and Chrétien conceive of them as distinct but neighbouring places.[1] This notion is consistent with the geographical history of the district. Mr. Greswell, if we understand him aright, finds the germ of the name Glastonbury in the term *clas* (Latin *classis*). The derivation does not appear very probable, but the arguments with which he supports it are extremely interesting.

"The Welsh *clas*," he writes, "hived off many kindred communities. So did Glastonbury. There were the Seven Islands, and the Seven Churches, and the Seven Sisters of Polden. But the magic of the old *clas* bound them together in obedience to the little Chapel of St. Joseph. The satellite islands were (1) Bekaria, called Parva Hibernia, whither Irish pilgrims turned their steps; (2) Ferramere with Westic, i.e. West Island, now corrupted into West Hay; (3) Padnebeorge or Pathenesburg, a vine-growing island; (4) Andredesey (Ylond or Nilond), so called from the *ecclesiola* of St. Andrew; (5) Martinisei, from the *ecclesiola* of St. Martin; (6) Godnei or Godney—each island in its way a sanctuary of the Faith and the abode of saints. But they circled round their 'Delos,' which was the ancient *clas* under the shadow of the Tor."

It may be added that the termination *ei* or *ey* represents the Anglo-Saxon *ig* ("an island"). Professor Rhys tells us that in Welsh topography *ynys* "means not only an island, but any rising ground with low-lying land around it, though not necessarily covered with water." That may be true of Welsh topography, but the Saxons were a less imaginative folk, and when they said *ig* they doubtless meant it. One of the most remarkable archæological discoveries of recent years has been that of a lake-village at

[1] See Section VI. below.

Meare, a mile or two from Glastonbury. The very name of this place is significant, and the Abbot's "Fish House," which not many years ago was perfectly entire, is standing evidence of the use to which the mere was applied. In historical times it was probably of no great extent, and now it has been completely drained, but here, we may well believe, was the shrunken residue of a vast lake which at certain periods, especially in winter, rendered Glastonbury inaccessible except by boats.

The name Glastonbury is usually supposed to be English, as it may be, though it has nothing to do with glass. If English, it indicates the colonisation of the island by a family or tribe. On this point Professor Skeat observes: "The Saxon name should be spelt Glaestinga-burig, where Glaestinga is the genitive plural, so that the word means 'the borough of the sons of Glaest.'" This seems to dispose of the notion that *glaes* (glass) corresponds with the Welsh element *wytryn*, yet the coincidence is certainly curious.

The chroniclers state that Glasteing was one of the twelve descendants of Cunedda, a powerful chief; and Professor Rhys points out that their names are to be found in a pedigree which contains also the names of Glast and Avallach, and establishes Glast as a Celtic divinity. He holds, therefore, that the name Glasteing is Celtic. William of Malmesbury certainly speaks as if Glasteing was one of the old British race. He and his brother are said to have travelled from the North of Britain down into the West Country and occupied lands formerly in possession of their ancestor Cunedda.

Rhys, however, believes that for "Glasteing" we ought to read "Glastenig," and that the latter is clearly derived from *glasten*, which in Breton meant "oak," as does the Cornish *glastanen*.

"The Glastenig of William of Malmesbury," he says, "is doubtless the place-name Glastenic made into the name of an eponymus for Glastonbury. It may well be that the Glast of the pedigree had nothing to do with any of the names here in point."

According to one legend, when St. Joseph and his faithful followers landed on the island, the auspicious event was celebrated by the planting of an oak known as the Oak of Avalon. Elms appear to be much commoner in the country round Glastonbury than oaks, but two fine old specimens of the latter may be seen in a lane not far from the Tor. These are sometimes called Avalon's Oaks, and sometimes Gog and Magog.

Whatever their origin may have been, Ynyswytryn and Glastonbury seem to have been plain matter-of-fact names conveying little or no sense of awe and mystery to those who used them in the ordinary commerce of life. But Avalon, or Avilion, always retained a measure of its old spiritual significance. When, it may be asked, did this particular locality become clothed with the attributes of a Celtic paradise?

It may be argued that the transformation cannot have been effected while the Britons were masters of the place —the familiar is always unimpressive. But we learn from Gildas that under the pressure of the Saxon hordes many of the Britons were driven oversea; and in Brittany—in the country of Vannes and Quimper—the exiles, in speaking to their children and children's children of the scenes they had lost for ever, would inevitably have idealised them. The "woody isle of Avalon" became an Eden of incomparable loveliness; and, as the centuries rolled on, the Breton bards enhanced and ennobled the popular illusion by investing the island with the myths of their Celtic heritage.

Something like this undoubtedly occurred, but the hypothesis that Avalon became Fairyland only when it became a memory and a dream is not really necessary. A very old notion is that fairy settlements were entered through a hill or mound, like that of Mider in the Irish legends. Moreover, it is a common Welsh belief that fairies dwelt in lakes. Glastonbury Tor, rising amidst its wreath of waters, realised both conditions. But that is not all. Mr. Rolleston quotes from the Celtic legends of

Etain a passage showing that the inhabitants of the Land of Youth, the Land of the Happy Dead, were supposed to be invisible:

> It is one of the wonders of that land that youth does not change to age.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> We see around us on every side, yet no man seeth us; the cloud of the sin of Adam hides us from their observation.

IV

Glastonbury—Beckery and Wirrall

At the conclusion of the *High History of the Holy Graal* we meet with the solemn pretence, permissible in a romance, that "the Latin from whence this history was drawn into romance was taken in the Isle of Avalon, in a holy house of religion that standeth at the head of the Moors Adventurous, there where King Arthur and Queen Guenièvre lie." If this statement could be regarded seriously, it would surprise us to observe the complete absence of local colour such as we might well expect in a work the original of which was composed in the Abbey of Glastonbury, or at least found there. It seems very probable that the reverse was the case, and that the Graal history was imported into Glastonbury, where one of its incidents was tricked out in Latin and enriched with local allusions to give it the requisite vraisemblance. We have already remarked on the eagerness of the monks in annexing every particle of history, tradition, and even romance, that would redound to the greater glory of their famous abbey. On the other hand, the Glastonbury story has the appearance of an independent version, and in its present late form may just possibly have been based on an original preserved in the abbey itself of which the romancer may have heard, but with the contents of which he was only superficially acquainted.

Early in the *High History* occurs the tale concerning Arthur, who had declined from his first estate of kingly virtue and become enslaved by the peculiarly mediæval vice *accidia*, one of the seven deadly sins. From this deplorable indolence, indifference, and desertion of noble ideals he is aroused by a vision which he sees in a chapel named St. Augustine's, which stands beside a hermitage in the White Forest. The hermit, with the boldness of an Old Testament prophet, reproves the peccant monarch, and Arthur, who had been moved by the tears of Queen Guenièvre to perform this pilgrimage, is encouraged to amend his life and restore the tarnished lustre of his discredited court.

In John Glaston's narrative, the White Forest and the Chapel of St. Augustine give place to an entirely different setting, and there is not a word as to any considerable lapse on the part of Arthur from the path of honour. The above outline of the story as recounted in the *High History of the Holy Graal* is quite insufficient for the purpose of comparison, but as that work is now easily accessible, being one of the volumes in Everyman's Library, the reader is recommended to consult it. John Glaston's *Chronicle*, which Hearne printed, belongs to another category, and probably not many copies exist outside the British Museum and other great libraries. Premising, therefore, a general similarity between the two versions, and without indicating any further points of difference, we offer a translation or paraphrase of the monk's tale, which, of course, is in Latin.

At this period there was situate within the Isle of Avalon, at Wirrall, a convent of holy virgins dedicated to the Apostle Peter, where Arthur, charmed with the sweetness of the spot, often rested and tarried. Once it befell, when the king was staying there and lay asleep on his embossed couch, that an angel of the Lord appeared to him, saying, "Arthur! Arthur!" And he, awaking, said, "Who art thou?" The angel answered, "I who speak unto thee. At break of day arise and walk to the hermitage of

St. Mary Magdalene of Beckery in yonder island. See and perceive what things shall there come to pass."

In the morning the king arose and told the vision to one of his knights named Gawain, who counselled the prince that it was merely an idle dream. Howsoever, the following night, when the king was fast asleep in the same place, the angel of the Lord appeared a second time and repeated the warning. Aroused and hearkening, the king considered what this might signify—not yet obeying the voice, but resolving that if it should come to him a third time he would on the third day.

Therefore, as soon as it was dusk, the king charged his attendant to be ready to accompany him on the morrow to the hermitage. The servitor, entering the chapel and seeing a dead body lying on a bier and four tapers standing on this side and on that, after the manner of monks, and on the altar two golden candlesticks, moved with covetousness, seized one of the candlesticks and hid it in his cloak, the iniquity of which deed was proved by the issue. For, when he would have departed from the chapel, there appeared to him a certain man who sharply demanded of him why he had been guilty of so great a crime and sacrilege, and wounded him in the groin.

Terribly hurt, he cried with a loud voice like one frantic, upon which the king awoke. Alarmed beyond measure, he began to question what this might portend, and, arising, went to his attendant's bed and examined him as to what had befallen him. The man narrated the truth of the matter in order, showing both the candlestick in his cloak and the steel in his groin. Soon after he expired, and was buried among the nuns at Wirrall, "in testimony whereof," says John Glaston, "the candlestick and the knife remain in the treasury of the King of England at Westminster."

The king, thereupon perceiving that God would not that any should enter the chapel save for the health of his soul, straightway at dawn walked thither alone; and as he drew nigh to the chapel, behold! two hands, holding swords that clashed together on either side of the door, from

which clashing started to the king's vision as it had been lightning. And he, being in great fear, took counsel within himself what he should do, not having been able to enter so holy a place. Presently he threw himself on his knees and besought the Lord to deal mercifully with him.

Prayer ended and pardon humbly entreated for sins and offences, Arthur arose and, seeing that the swords had vanished, entered the holy place, which was incomparably dight. There met him a worshipful old man clad in black vesture, who saluted him. The king humbly returned the salutation, and stationed himself near the side of the chapel that he might see the end. He saw all things also that his servant had described to him.

The old man now began to array himself in priestly vestments, and straightway appeared the blessed and glorious Mother of the Lord, bearing in her arms her Son, and ministered to the old man aforesaid. Beginning the mass, he proceeded as far as the offertory, when the benign Lady immediately presented her Son to the priest, and he placed Him on the altar beside the chalice. On coming to the sacrifice of the Host—that is, the Lord's words, "This is My Body"—he raised the Boy in his arms, and Arthur, standing by the Lord's sacrifice, nay, by the Lord Himself, worshipped in suppliant guise. The Boy having been offered up, the old man set Him in the same place as before. For when he had come to the reception of the Host, he took the same Boy, the Son of God, and ate Him, after the Lord's appointment, "Receive and eat." This reception and communion being concluded, the Paschal Lamb appeared unharmed and whole, without a stain.

When all the divine office had been performed, the mighty and glorious Mother, in token of the things aforesaid, gave the king a crystal cross, which "even to this day," says the monk John, "is honourably kept and guarded as a present of the same king in the treasury of Glastonbury, and borne every year in the season of Lent in processions appointed by the monastery on the fourth

and sixth days, because on the fourth—that is, Ash Wednesday—had been wrought this miracle."

After these things the Lady took back her Son and they vanished from the eyes of the bystanders. Beholding all these things steadfastly, the famous king rejoiced with great joy, and inquired of the holy man concerning the Woman and her Offspring. The old man expounded all things—that she was the Mistress of the World, the Queen of Heaven, and her Son whom she carried our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and Man, who to-day is offered in the ministry of the altar in His Church Militant, in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

Concerning the dead body resting there unburied, he said that it was that of a hermit, a member of the confraternity at Andredsey,[1] who had come to visit him, and, having been seized with sickness, had departed this life, for whom he was performing masses and offering prayers to the Lord God, day and night.

In a moment the king was pricked to the heart, and, contrite as concerning his sins, he vowed that he would firmly believe on the Holy Sacrament, and whatsoever was required of him he would gladly grant for the love of the mighty and glorious Virgin Mary and her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. His arms also he changed in honour of her. For whereas from the hour of the coming of Brutus even to the said change they had been argent with three red lions turning their heads to their backs, in memory of the crystal cross bestowed upon him by the Blessed Mary he made them to be vert, with cross argent; and on the right arm of the cross, in commemoration of the aforesaid miracle, he set the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, holding her Son in her arms.[2] Confirmed in the faith of the

[1] See *supra*, p. 68.

[2] Nennius says that the likeness of the Virgin was borne on Arthur's *shoulder*. The shield no doubt was carried on the shoulder, but the statement may be due to a confusion of the two Welsh words *ysgwyd* (a shield) and *ysgwyt*, now commonly written *ysgwydd* (a shoulder). Cp. Wordsworth:

"Rise! they have risen: of brave Aneurin ask
How they have scourged old foes, perfidious friends:

Lord, the king bade farewell to the old man, and, advancing from virtue to virtue, was gladdened exceedingly.

The vision is said to have occurred not long before Arthur's war on the Continent and the treachery of Mordred. John Glaston goes on to mention the king's final battles and his death at Glastonbury.

We have given the story at length because it shows how completely the legend, if it was not merely a romantic fiction, was localised at Glastonbury. It was, in fact, more than localised—it was materialised; and the crystal cross displayed to the faithful doubtless promoted pilgrimages and helped to fill the coffers of the brotherhood of St. Benedict.

Irish pilgrims, as Mr. Greswell observes, turned their steps to Beckery, which was also called Parva Hibernia. A local antiquary informed us that in Erse *bach Erin* would have this meaning, and that the name of an island off the coast of Ireland has been similarly corrupted. It seems more likely, however, that the name (cp. Othery) is pure Saxon, the last syllable denoting the insular character of the spot, which was a member of the tiny archipelago before referred to.

The Irish were attracted to Beckery not by the tale of Arthur's vision, but by the memory of a compatriot. St. Bridget is said to have arrived at Glastonbury about A.D. 488, and to have made a prolonged stay, extending over several years, on an island near the town, wherein was an oratory dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene. When St. Bridget returned to Ireland, she left in Somerset her wallet, her rosary and her weaving-tools, which in John Glaston's time were still shown and reverenced at Beckery. He adds that the chapel on the island was then St. Bridget's, and that in its southern part was a hole through which

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The spirit of Caractacus defends
The patriots, animates their glorious task:—
Amazement runs before the towering casque
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy field
The Virgin sculptured on his Christian shield.
Ecclesiastical Sonnets.

whosoever passed would, according to popular belief, obtain the pardon of his sins.

There is no doubt that a chapel in honour of St. Bridget formerly existed at Beckery—a fact to which the name of certain fields known as St. Bride's bore witness after all material traces of it had vanished. At the close of the eighteenth century Collinson discovered some remains, but they disappeared, and for a long time the exact site of the chapel was problematical. At length, in 1887–8, the foundations, betrayed by the parched state of the overlying turf, were rediscovered and explored. The building occupied the highest part of the island, called Chamberlain's Hill, whence an uninterrupted view may be obtained of the plains as far as the Bristol Channel, whilst in other directions the horizon is bounded by the Poldens, Weary-all Hill, Glastonbury and the Mendips.

The foundations pointed to the existence of two chapels built successively on the same site, except that the later quadrangular edifice was somewhat larger than and contained the more ancient structure. This old sanctuary had a chancel and a nave divided by a transverse wall, which probably supported a chancel arch. Though it had massive walls, the chapel was extremely small, the interior of the chancel being only nine feet by eight and that of the nave fourteen feet by eleven. The more modern building may have been erected by Abbot John of Glastonbury, who flourished about 1275, and is said to have repaired the chapels of Beckery and Godney. The age of the older is not easy to estimate, but the extreme thickness of the walls is consistent with Anglo-Saxon workmanship.

About twenty feet from the oratory, and at right angles to it, have been traced the foundations of a small house, enclosing those of a smaller and older habitation. Here no doubt we have the abode of John Glaston's hermit, and the *locale* of the vision may now be deemed satisfactorily determined. Whether there was ever a Convent of St. Peter at Wirrall is less certain. No such establishment appears to have been there in Glaston's time, and, unless

it was pure invention, the circumstance must have been a matter of tradition. In historical times Wirrall was the park of the Abbot of Glastonbury, and on its southern slopes were vineyards.

In these days one does not hear at Glastonbury of Wirrall, but of Weary-all Hill. It is the elevated ground on the right as one proceeds to the town from the railway-station, and, as regards steepness, is not to be compared with the Tor. The popular name "Weary-all" is represented in a Somerset song obtained by Mr. John Timbs from oral sources as an exclamation of Joseph of Arimathea when he first landed on this spot. Here also he struck his staff into the ground, which, like Aaron's rod, budded and gave forth a delicious perfume. At Christmas it blossomed.

It is an historical and botanical fact that the Holy Thorn blossomed at Glastonbury (not perhaps so long ago as the age of the Apostles, but in the time of Thomas Cromwell) at Christmastide, as it does still. Withering was the first to give the Glastonbury thorn a botanical name —he called it *Cratægus Oxyacantha Præcox*. Plants grown from the haws lose the characteristics of the parent stock; and locally the thorn is propagated by grafting or budding.

When at Glastonbury in the spring of 1905, the writer was informed that time after time the authorities had planted off-shoots of the Holy Thorn where it was believed to have first sprung on Weary-all Hill, but these attempts to perpetuate the old tradition were frustrated by the folly and selfishness of visitors, who barked the plants and plucked off twigs and branches, with the result that the young trees bled to death. Recourse was then had to another method, and a monumental stone was laid in the ground at the spot where the thorn once flourished. The stone is four feet eight inches long and two feet eight inches wide. It is inscribed with the initials of Joseph of Arimathea and the date A.D. 31.

Probably the earliest mention of this "marvel" occurs in a metrical *Lyfe of Joseph of Armathia* printed by Richard

Pynson in 1520, in which three hawthorns are described as growing in Wirrall and burgeoning and bearing green leaves at Christmas. Reference is made in the same poem to a walnut-tree "hard by the place where King Arthur (i.e. the bones of Arthur) was found." The peculiarity of this was that it bore no leaves till St. Barnabas' Day, when it spread its foliage like any other tree.

V

Glastonbury—The Chalice Hill

The vision that Arthur beheld at Beckery was that of the Holy Grail. We have previously alluded to the companion narrative (or original?) in the *High History of the Holy Graal*, but the reader may be reminded of Malory's story of Galahad's fulfilment of the quest in the twentieth chapter of Book XVII., where the vessel itself is brought into prominence. "This is, said he, the holy dish wherein I ate the lamb on Sher-Thursday. And now hast thou seen that thou most desiredst to see, but yet hast thou not seen it so openly as thou shalt see it in the city of Sarras, in the spiritual place."

Galahad was then in the Castle of Carbonec, with the probable position of which we shall deal later. For the present it must suffice to state that there is no obvious reason for connecting it with Beckery or Glastonbury, where the legend seems to have taken a somewhat different form. Before entering on this part of our subject, it may be as well to point out that the Grail, in its origin, may be a pagan rather than a Christian conception. The cauldron of the Dagda, the Irish Jupiter, with its inexhaustible supply of food, has an evident resemblance to it. Angus, the son of the Dagda, and Manannan mac Lir, the Irish sea-god, had also their life-sustaining cauldrons; and their palaces, though accessible to mortals, were like the Grail castle, in that they were apt to vanish away. A magic cauldron, possessing a healing virtue, belongs to the Welsh

Bran, son of Llyr, and here we may note the similarity between that name and Brons, the name of one of the Grail-keepers. Alain, that of another Grail-keeper, also appears to be Celtic.

In the tale of *Branwen the Daughter of Llyr*, in the Mabinogion, Bran is made to say: "I will give unto thee a cauldron, the property of which is that, if one of thy men be slain to-day, and be cast therein, to-morrow he will be as well as ever he was at the best, except that he will not regain his speech."

Now Bran was known as Bran the Blessed because, according to a Welsh Triad, he introduced Christianity into Britain. If for the Celtic king we substitute Joseph of Arimathea, to whom the conversion of Britain was likewise attributed, we can see how easily the pagan myth may have passed into a Christian legend. When the cauldron of rejuvenation became identified with the sacramental vessel, Bran, as the possessor of the treasure, would be inconceivable and St. Joseph would take his place as a more likely character.

Although the Isle of Avilion and Castle of Carbonec are distinct places in the *Morte Darthur*, we cannot quite disconnect the former from the circle of ideas in which we now find ourselves. Healing, rejuvenation, was in the very air of the island-valley, "where," Arthur says, "I will heal me of my grievous wound."

According to the legend, the dish used at the Last Supper was stolen by a servant of Pilate, who washed his hands in it before the multitude. Pilate then gave it to Joseph as a memento, and Joseph collected in it the holy blood flowing from the five wounds. In Robert de Borron's Old French poem, Christ appears to Joseph in a dream and says to him:

> " Cist viessiaus ou men sanc meis,
> Quant de men cors le requeillis,
> Calices apelez sara."

("This vessel wherein thou didst put my blood, when thou didst collect it from my body, shall be called a chalice.")

By a natural transition the dish, having been used to hold the Saviour's blood, was confused with the sacramental vessel, the chalice; and so it is that Tennyson writes in the *Holy Grail*:

> "Nay, monk! what phantom?" answer'd Percivale.
> "The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
> Drank at the last sad supper with his own.
> This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
> After the day of darkness, when the dead
> Went wandering o'er Moriah—the good saint,
> Arimathæan Joseph, journeying brought
> To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
> Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord."
> And there awhile it bode; and if a man
> Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at once,
> By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
> Grew to such evil that the holy cup
> Was caught away to Heaven, and disappear'd."

From the first the notion of a cup, rather than a dish, appears to have prevailed at Glastonbury. In John Glaston's *Chronicle* it is surprising how little is made of the tradition; and, moreover, the two passages in which he alludes to it are discordant. In the former, derived from the *Gestes of the famous King Arthur*, he speaks of one vessel, while in the latter, based on the *Book of Melkin*, a forerunner of Merlin, he tells of two silver flagons, filled to the brim with the blood and sweat of Jesus, which Joseph has with him in his tomb. Melkin predicts that the time will come when (a spectacle for the world!) the tomb will be found uninjured. In those days neither water nor dew from heaven shall fail the inhabitants of the city most noble.

Apparently the chronicler does not identify the two flagons buried with Joseph of Arimathea, or either of them, with the Holy Grail. He alludes to the quest—"in inquisitione vasis quod ibi (i.e. in the Arthurian romances) vocant Sanctum Graal"—but he gives no hint that he knew of its actual whereabouts. Nevertheless, the two flagons or cruets, full of the blood of Christ, differ but little from the later conception of the Grail as the chalice or communion cup.

The cruets make an essential part of the Glastonbury

tradition, and the title-page of the metrical *Lyfe of Joseph of Armathia* (which there is every reason to suppose was composed at Glastonbury) is scored with them. The chalice version, however, seems to have taken root there. To the south-west of the Tor is the Chalice Hill; and in the depression between the two hills rises the Blood Spring, which flows into the Chalice Well in the garden of what was recently the Catholic College. The approach to the well is by way of Chilkwell Street. This is undoubtedly a very ancient name, the first syllable being equivalent to the German *Kelk* and our common word chalice.

The water is chalybeate, and, on coming in contact with the air, at once oxidises. On all the stones over which it passes oxide of iron is deposited, and, collecting in round masses, exactly resembles clotted blood. The stream was conducted in mediæval times to a well in the crypt of St. Joseph's Chapel; and there it was the cause of many miracles. There appear to be no legends or traditions respecting either the Blood Spring or the Chalice Hill, but there may have been once. Probably the story was formerly current that St. Joseph hid the chalice or Holy Grail in the Chalice Hill.[1]

[1] Mr. Edward Hutton, in his *Highways and Byways of Somerset*, declares that there is a legend that Joseph buried the Grail in Chalice Hill; and Mr. G. W. Wright, a local antiquary, states that "Joseph brought with him the chalice of the last supper, and hid it, or in some way located it, in or on the hill which henceforth was to be sacred to its memory, and to be known as Chalice Hill." All this is very vague. See next section.

VI

Glastonbury—The Abbey

The traditional landing-place of Joseph of Arimathea is Combwich—a circumstance duly recorded in "an old legend of poetry" which gives to the Holy Thorn a symbolical significance:

The good saint Arimathean Joseph, borne by the Parret's tide
To Combwich, o'er the Mendips at length he came to Glaston's hide.
"Here I'll build a wattle church"—he planted a Christian staff.
'Twas Christmas now—at Christmas time the staff with blossoms laugh:
A miracle—a miracle—a miracle it turned to be,
That Christian churches from that time should cover the whole countree.
The staff was a thorn brought from the Holy Land—'tis known
That Christian churches throughout England, from its branches they have grown.

When we were at Glastonbury we were made acquainted with a tradition that Joseph of Arimathea was a tin-merchant, and that he brought our Lord in His boyhood to mid-Somerset. The late Rev. W. S. Lach-Szyrma, in a paper on *The Ancient Population of Cornwall*, discusses the probability of commercial intercourse between Palestine and Britain, and incidentally refers to this tradition.

He thus writes:

"Some say also Jewish blood is in many Cornish families. We know that here we are opening a most dangerous topic of ethnology. Some think that Professor Max Müller crushed out this tradition that Jewish miners worked at tin mines, and Jewish traders dealt in tin. He explained away the philological fallacies which had been adduced to support this theory. But there is evidence besides the philological —which last, I expect, never had much weight with the Cornish miners or peasants. They believed Jews were in Cornwall on other grounds, and these are fairly plausible —i.e. the love of the Jews for dealing in metal, the probability that they were driven here by the Romans, the

Jewish type of some of the Cornish people supporting the theory which was fixed by the legends that the Jews were sent as slaves to the Cornish mines by Titus, after the fall of Jerusalem, and also the Somerset tales that Joseph of Arimathea was a tin merchant, and made his fortune in the Cornish tin trade, and thus was led to bring the Holy Grail to Glastonbury. At any rate, philology has nothing to do with these legends, whether we reject them as absurd or not. The fact is that there is something both of the Spanish or Iberian and the Jewish type of face in many hundreds of Cornish families. They may be what evolutionists call atavism or reproduction of the ancestral type. It looks as if some of the ancestors of these men were Spaniards or Jews."

If St. Joseph was indeed enriched by mining, of which there is not a tittle of historical evidence, his presence in Somerset may be easily accounted for. There are remains of lead-workings in the county, particularly in the Mendip Hills; and a mass of that metal, found at Wookey Hole, close to Wells, in the reign of Henry VIII., is said to have borne the inscription:

TI. CLAVD. CAESAR AVG. PM. TR. P.
VIII IMP. XVI DE BRITAN.

The canonical narrative, if the epithet may be allowed, is remarkable for two circumstances—its lateness and the vagueness of the evidence on which it is founded. The germ is to be discovered in sundry interpolations in William of Malmesbury's work on the Church of Glastonbury—interpolations acknowledged to be early. Born about 1075, William appears to have died in 1142. Two centuries later, his continuator, John Glaston, produced a much fuller narrative, prefaced by the statement that it was derived from a book discovered by the Emperor Theodosius in Pilate's palace at Jerusalem. The reference is to the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, which the first portion of the legend literally reproduces. It contains no allusion to Britain, and yet for some reason this and similar writings

attained an early and wide popularity in England. "Owing," says the late Mr. Alfred Nutt, "to circumstances of which we know nothing, this group of apocrypha was familiar to, and influential with, English writers in the eighth to the eleventh centuries, at a time when no trace of it can be found in the other literatures of Western Christendom."

John Glaston mentions one other support—Freculphus. This is indeed a broken reed. Freculphus was Bishop of Lisieux in the ninth century, and his authority is invoked to establish the presence of St. Philip in Gaul. Whatever may be the meaning of the obscure phrase "Philippus Gallias," it avails nothing against the laborious research of Eusebius, who, writing five centuries earlier, gives no countenance to the idea that the apostle ever quitted Asia Minor.

John Glaston invests his narrative with a deep seriousness well calculated to carry conviction. He tells how the Jews, when they hear that Joseph has buried Jesus, are seized with overpowering resentment against him. Nicodemus is also in some degree the object of their wrath, but as he has simply pleaded our Lord's cause before Pilate, his offence is condoned, and he is suffered to go free. Joseph, on the contrary, is imprisoned in a dark chamber, seals being placed on the doors and guards set. Despite these precautions Joseph escapes and is found in his own city of Arimathea.

The chief priests are amazed at the occurrence, and Joseph is induced to return to Jerusalem and explain the mystery. Jesus, he declares, has appeared to him and appeased his doubts by conducting him to His burial-place, and afterwards to his own home at Arimathea. Baptized with his son Josephe,[1] he is deputed by St. John to attend the Blessed Virgin whilst that apostle preaches the Gospel to the Ephesians; and, together with Philip and the other disciples, he witnesses St. Mary's assumption.

Fifteen years pass, and Joseph, with his son, who has

[1] The final letter is distinctive. Sometimes the name is spelt "Josaphe" (like "Seraphe").

been consecrated bishop in the City of Sarras, journeys to the Apostle Philip, who is in Gaul; and Joseph and Josephe are sent with ten other disciples to proclaim the Gospel in Britain. Two larger companies afterwards voyage to the same island—one on Josephe's shirt. (As the *Grand St. Graal* expresses it, "He it was who passed his father's kin across the sea to White Britain, since called England, without rudder or sail, but in the fold of his shirt.") For the other company a ship is sent which Solomon fashioned so cunningly that it has lasted to the times of Christ.

After sore trouble with an unbelieving king of North Wales, who casts Joseph into prison, deprives him of the necessaries of life, and is slain in fight by two valiant Medes, Mordrains and Naciens—names which Malory has made familiar—the twelve evangelists wander through Britain, preaching the Faith.

It is now the year 62 and Arviragus is reigning in Britain. Joseph and his companions fail to convert the monarch, but he is impressed with their virtuous living and bestows upon them the island of Ynyswytryn, a rough spot encompassed with woods and briers and marshes, on the margin of his own dominion. There they dwell and build them a wattled church, which, all mean as it is, is dedicated to the Mother of God by her Divine Son. Succeeding monarchs grant or confirm to each of the brethren a hide of land: hence the Twelve Hides of Glastonbury.

At last Joseph dies and is buried. After that the place, from being the habitation of saints, becomes a den of wild animals until it pleases the Blessed Virgin that her oratory shall return to the memory of the faithful.

John Glaston's narrative, full as it is, is defective, inasmuch as it tells us little of the younger Joseph, or Josephe, beyond the circumstance of his navigable shirt. The want is supplied by an Early English alliterative poem, which states that Joseph of Arimathea bore with him from Jerusalem the holy grail, or sacred dish, containing Christ's blood in an ark with mystic properties. At Sarras (supposed to be in Media), Josephe, Joseph's son, in accordance with

our Lord's directions, opens the ark and beholds in a vision first the mystery of the Passion and then a pageant of angels, two and two, bearing silver basins, cruets, pots of holy water, censers set with rich stones, and a vial of incense. Next comes Gabriel, the Strength of God, with a most sumptuous seat, followed by two other angels with cross and mitre, and two more with vestments. Next Josephe discerns an altar richly draped; on one end lie the lance and the nails and on the other the dish with the blood. Between them is a vessel of gold. Christ then consecrates him bishop with both His hands.

Thus Josephe figures in mediæval legends as the first Christian bishop to set foot in Britain, and in the chapter of the *Morte Darthur* describing Galahad's vision of the Holy Grail he is depicted as bearing in midst of his forehead letters that said, "See ye here Joseph, the first bishop of Christendom, the same which our Lord succoured in the city of Sarras, in the spiritual place." (Book XVII. chap. xx.) This younger Joseph ranks as the first Grail-keeper, and Galahad, be it noted, is "of the kindred of Joseph of Arimathie." (Book XIII. chap. iv.)

Where was the Grail kept by Josephe? In view of the alleged statement in the *Book of Melkin* that Joseph of Arimathea had the two silver flagons with him in his grave, it would not be surprising if the Grail were kept in the crypt of St. Joseph's Chapel, whither the stream was conducted from Chalice Hill, and where was the wonder-working holy well. This would account for the complete absence of all legends concerning the hill itself, which would only be of minor importance as the source of the stream. The latter might have borne some such name as Chalice Brook, and thus, quite naturally, the hill in which it rose would have been called Chalice Hill.

Following the local custom, we have referred to the beautiful edifice now in ruins as St. Joseph's Chapel, but it ought strictly to be called St. Mary's Chapel. The late Mr. James Parker passes some severe strictures on the ordinary usages.

"I must add," he writes, "that I have not met with the name of St. Joseph's Chapel in any single document previous to the eighteenth century. Leland does not know the name; at least he does not give it. I am rather curious to know who was the author of the name. Was it given after the Dissolution with a view of staying the hand of the spoiler? Or is it an instance of the slip-shod and blundering nomenclature not infrequent with seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers, and which frequently gives rise to myths which undermine the true history?"

In an anonymous history of Glastonbury published by Hearne and known to have been written by Mr. Eystow, a seventeenth-century writer, and a Roman Catholic, we are informed, "St. Joseph's Chapel was so called, not that it was dedicated to him, but because St. Joseph built it." There are other examples of this usage previous to the eighteenth century, though they seem to have eluded Parker's research. The original edition of Dugdale's *Monasticon* (dated 1655) contains views and a plan of the ruins of the Abbey by Hollar, who letters the west chapel *Josephi sacellum*; and Mr. Ray, in his *Itinerary* (1662), narrates how he rode to Glastonbury and "saw Joseph of Arimathea's Tomb and Chapel at the end of the church." Similarly, Stukely, in his day and *Itinerary*, termed the building "the chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, the patron and asserted founder of the whole." He adds, "This, they say, was the first Christian church in Britain. The present work is about the third building on the spot."

As we have seen, the original church is said to have been of wicker. We have seen, too, that on the death of the last of Joseph's disciples the humble oratory fell into neglect and became the lurking-place of wild animals. The little wicker sanctuary, which many historians believe to have existed, though not necessarily through the faith and devotion of Joseph of Arimathea, was long and affectionately known as the "Old Church." It is recorded that the structure was repaired and restored towards the close of the fifth century—probably not for the first time—but

it appears to have retained its primitive characteristics until the former half of the seventh century, when, "according to the traditions of the fathers, St. Paulinus, Bishop of Rochester and afterwards Archbishop of York, clothed the church, which before was made of intertwined rods, with planks and covered it with lead from top to bottom." The chronicler proceeds: "Assuredly this praiseworthy man exerted all his skill to do this in such a manner that the church should lose none of its sanctity, but acquire great increase of embellishment. For it is certain that the adornment of churches renders them more impressively influential in alluring uncultivated minds to prayer and bending the stiff-necked to submission."

The trend of these passages suggests that the Old Church at that period underwent so complete a change, both within and without, that the building thus transformed may be regarded as the second church occupying the time-honoured site. So far as can be gathered, the rejuvenated Old Church lasted to the time of the great fire of 1184, when the work of rebuilding was begun without delay under the supervision of Randolph, a son of King Stephen, and the chamberlain of King Henry II. The royal architect acquitted himself right well. "He completed the Church of St. Mary in the place where from the beginning the Old Church had stood, building it of squared stones of the most beautiful workmanship, omitting no possible ornament." It is stated to have been dedicated by Reginald, Bishop of Bath, on St. Barnabas' Day, June 11, A.D. 1186.

About the middle of the thirteenth century, the rectangular Norman chapel was enlarged by the addition of the Early English annexe, and so connected with the Greater Church of the Abbey. Yet later, the east wall of the Norman building was pierced by a large arch, the exact position of which is indicated by the flat piers or pilasters which still remain. Measured from the Norman partition wall, the length of the Early English structure was nearly equal to that of the Norman chapel, which in

breadth it greatly exceeded. Apparently its sole purpose was to serve as a porch or galilee to the Greater Church, which it united with the Norman chapel, the priests passing from one to the other by means of lateral doors. Between these there probably stood a reredos on the site of the east Norman wall, beneath the arch that opened between St. Mary's Chapel proper and the Early English continuation. This reredos was probably not so high as to obstruct the view of the interior beyond, and anyone standing with his back to the west wall of the chapel would have been able to command the perspective of the nave to the steps beneath the tower, and of the choir (rising probably by other steps) to the altar at the extreme east end. So grand and imposing a spectacle was hardly to be matched in England.

We have deemed it expedient to furnish a tolerably full account of the traditions belonging to St. Joseph's Chapel, which has attracted the footsteps of countless pilgrims; but underlying name and traditions alike is a great assumption—that Christianity was introduced into Britain in the apostolic age. The conversion of Britain has been attributed not only to St. Joseph, but to various other persons—notably St. Paul and St. Peter. In a sonnet aptly styled *Conjectures*, Wordsworth pleasantly indicates the contending claims:

> If there be prophets on whose spirits rest
> Past things, revealed like future, they can tell
> What powers, presiding o'er the sacred well
> Of Christian faith, this savage island blessed
> With its first bounty. Wandering through the West,
> Did holy Paul awhile in Britain dwell
> And call the fountain forth by miracle,
> And with dread signs the nascent stream invest?
> Or he whose bonds dropped off, whose prison doors
> Flew open, by an angel's voice unbarr'd?
> Or some of humbler name to these wild shores
> Storm-driven, who, having seen the cup of woe
> Pass from their Master, sojourned here to guard
> The precious current they had taught to flow?

The poet's own attitude is negative, or at least incon-

clusive. In an accompanying note he tells us that Stillingfleet's many arguments in support of a Pauline mission have failed to convince him, whilst the legend of St. Joseph and his companions is dismissed "as a favourite notion of Catholic writers." Wordsworth's brother-poet, Southey, in his *Book of the Church*, fixes on the legend of the Blessed Bran as "the most probable tradition," but he shows a wise reserve and quotes with approval Fuller's saying, "The light of the Word shone here, but we know not who kindled it." Southey, however, shared the common opinion that the first British church was erected at Glastonbury, "because it was not contradicted in those ages when other churches would have found it profitable to advance a similar pretension"; and because in the seventh century the facts and fictions of early British Christianity were employed to decide the claims of rival churches.

Later writers incline to be more sceptical. Thus Mr. Haddan declares that statements respecting British Christians at Rome, British Christians in Britain, and apostles or apostolic men preaching in Britain in the first century rest upon guess, mistake or fable; and he adds that evidence alleged for the existence of a Christian church in Britain during the second century is similarly unhistorical.

Dr. Haverfield, whilst admitting that it is difficult to discover what is certain or probable respecting British Christianity in the first four centuries, deduces from the silence of ancient writers that Christianity reached Britain by natural expansion rather than by organised missionary effort. As a hypothetical statement, he suggests that during the third century, perhaps earlier, individual Christians on individual errands reached Britain, most of them from Rome, Gaul and Germany, some perhaps from other parts of the Empire, and that gradually congregations were formed, and in time bishoprics were established by the aid of the Gallican bishops.

With these eminent scholars Freeman is in substantial agreement: "I am, on the whole, strongly inclined to

believe, on the one hand, that it was a true tradition, something, in fact, more than tradition, which connected Glastonbury, as an ecclesiastical foundation, with days before the English invasion, but to believe also, on the other hand, that at the time of the English invasion it was not a foundation of any great antiquity."

In the face of these judgments there appears to be no room for the notion that Joseph of Arimathea ever landed at Glastonbury and preached the Faith there. On the other hand, it is quite possible that the earlier legend, which represented him as one of the many worthies of the place, was genuine enough. We have shown in connection with the Holy Grail how his name might have been substituted for that of Bran in the process of christianising Celtic superstitions, but there is a vast difference between the primitive version of the story and what Freeman calls "the amazing Joseph-worship" of the fifteenth century. It is considered by competent authorities that the growth of the legend was artificially fostered, or, to put it plainly, that the conversion of Britain myth was, in its later development, a political fraud.

"The monks pretended," writes Sir John Rhys, "that their founder was Joseph of Arimathea, whom they represented as the first to convert the people of the country to Christianity. According to their fabulous assertion, the claims of the Church of Rome to supremacy in matters relating to the faith in this realm had no foundation; and this fell in with the views of Henry II., whose differences with the Papacy culminated in the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The king is said to have had the pretensions of Glastonbury examined and approved; for they struck not only at Rome, but also at St. David's, and the traditions of the Welsh, who were a source of annoyance to Henry."

The inquisition led to another result than the confirmation of the Joseph legend. "So," continues Rhys, "in the year 1189 the said monks requited the king's favour by discovering at Glastonbury the tombs of Arthur and

his wife, together with that of his favourite Gwalchmei [Gawain]. This discovery was calculated to discourage the troublesome Welshmen, who were credited with looking forward to the return of Arthur to lead them to victory over all their enemies.—There is no reason to suppose that the ingenious monks of Glastonbury were the first to identify Insula Avallonia, or Ynys Avallach, with that place; they were in this merely following what had possibly for ages previously been the popular idea."

Not many years before the invention of Arthur's tomb,[1] William of Malmesbury had expressly stated that the burial-place of Arthur was unknown; and among the Welsh no tradition was better established. In the *Memorials of the Graves of the Warriors* it is asserted:

> The grave of March is this, and this the grave of Gwythyr;
> Here is the grave of Gwgawn Gleddyfrudd,
> But unknown is the grave of Arthur.

Naturally, for Arthur was thought not to have died, but to have been translated. Malmesbury says that the story-loving Britons and their bards used to feign that a certain imaginary goddess carried the body of the wounded king to Avalon, and that, when his wounds were healed, he would return strong and powerful to rule the Britons, just as the Jews, in their blind unbelief, expected the Messiah as yet to come. Nevertheless, Henry II. is said to have heard of Arthur's burial-place in that part of his dominions where the information might have been least anticipated. Visiting Wales, he came in contact with the bards, from whom he learned that, according to tradition, Arthur and Guinevere were buried in the cemetery of Glastonbury Abbey, near two pyramids. Such pyramids undoubtedly existed, since William of Malmesbury has left a description of them. To judge from his account, they had no connection whatever with the royal pair. The monuments were apparently of Saxon origin.

[1] We use the word "invention" in a hagiographical sense. Mr. Pearson deems the alleged inscription apocryphal, and that alone.

Be that as it may, King Henry's curiosity was aroused, and on his return to England, he expressed to the Abbot, Henry de Soully, his desire that search should be made for the bones of his illustrious predecessor, concerning whom the bards had informed him that the common notion that Arthur was buried in a stone coffin was incorrect. His remains, they declared, would be found in a hollowed-out oak.

In obedience to the royal mandate the Abbot fixed a day for the quest, at which the entire brotherhood was present; and among the spectators was Giraldus Cambrensis, who kept a record of the proceedings. The monks dug and dug, till at last they came to a leaden cross attached to a stone. This was brought to the surface and ascertained to bear the inscription:

> Hic jacet sepultus inclitus Rex Arthurus in insula Avallonia cum Guinevera uxore sua secunda.

After that they were not long in finding a stone coffin, in which lay the bones of a woman. Her beautiful golden tresses still fell about her poor remains, but on the touch of a monk they turned to dust. None doubted that before them lay all that was mortal of Queen Guinevere. The digging was then resumed, and about sixteen feet deep they discovered a great oak, answering to the description of the bards. It was opened and found to contain the bones of an enormous man. For the sake of comparison, one of the shin-bones was placed against the leg of the tallest of the company, and it reached three fingers' lengths beyond his knee. On the skull, which was also huge, were counted ten wounds or more. All were cicatrised save one, which had evidently been mortal. Again none doubted that here were the veritable remains of King Arthur, which, with those of his queen, were collected and conveyed in a very solemn manner to the church. In due course a richly carved mausoleum was erected over them within the sacred walls, and before the high altar.

No further disturbance of the remains occurred until

the year 1278, when Edward I. and Queen Eleanor paid a visit to Glastonbury and were entertained by the monks. At dusk the king commanded the sepulchre to be opened; and in the two coffins were exposed the bones of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere, the former being stated to be of unwonted size and the latter of wondrous beauty.

Giraldus Cambrensis's story, which was copied by the local chroniclers, seems not to have been known to Malory —at any rate, he has supplied a totally different account of some of the circumstances. There is a note of wistful uncertainty in his reference to what became of Arthur after his last fateful voyage to the Isle of Avilion:

"Yet some men say in many parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu in another place. And men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross. I will not say it shall be so, but rather I will say here in this world he changed his life. But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse:

Hic jacet Arthurus Rex quondam Rexque futurus."

However careful Malory may be to record a widespread belief, with which it is evident he is half in sympathy, he does not really cherish any illusions on the subject of Arthur's death and burial. His narrative places that beyond the reach of controversy.

In *The Passing of Arthur* the bold Sir Bedivere watches the mysterious barge till it appears but a speck:

Down that long water opening on the deep.

After that we hear no more of Arthur—indeed, any addition would have been felt to be in the nature of an anti-climax. Malory, on the other hand, carries on the story, stating that after losing sight of the barge Sir Bedivere took to the forest, and in the morning became aware of a chapel and a hermitage between two holts (or wooded hills). There, in the chapel, he espied a new grave in which his lord King Arthur had been laid, and

forthwith resolved to abide with the hermit. This chapel is said to have been "beside" Glastonbury—which bears out our previous suggestion that Malory did not conceive of Avilion and Glastonbury as quite one and the same.

The next to join is Sir Lancelot, and he is followed by Sir Galihud, Sir Galihodin, Sir Blamor, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Williars, Sir Clarrus and Sir Galahantine, all of whom turn hermits under the good father who had been Bishop of Canterbury before he was banished by Sir Mordred. Thither also was brought the body of Queen Guinevere from Almesbury, to be interred with her husband in a cered cloth of Raynes, after which Sir Lancelot "ate but little meat."

It is hardly worth while to attempt to localise the chapel and hermitage. Malory's description of them as "between two holts hoar," or, as he says later, "cliffs," is probably purely fanciful, and would not be applicable to Beckery, where Arthur had been blessed with the celestial vision. Still, Beckery would be correctly spoken of as "beside Glastonbury"—in other words adjacent to, but not within its recognised boundary. Lest it should be supposed that the phrase is used loosely, we may point out that in Book XXI. chap. i. it is stated that the Bishop of Canterbury, when sought by Mordred, fled and "went *nigh unto* Glastonbury, and there he was a priest-hermit in a chapel." That this chapel was in the island-valley of Avilion is denoted by its situation between two holts,[1] and the bishop-hermit's testimony—"at midnight here came a number of ladies and brought hither a dead corpse, and prayed me to bury him."

[1] The romances speak of "the *woody* Isle of Avalon."

VII

Brent Knoll

William of Malmesbury, in his work on the antiquities of Glastonbury, records the following incident. At Caerlleon, at a certain festival of the Nativity, King Arthur knighted the valiant young Ider, son of King Nuth, and, in order to prove him, sent him to the Mount of Frogs, now called Brent Knoll (*in montem ranarum, nunc dictum Brentecnol*), where were three giants infamous for their misdeeds. Going in advance of his companions, Ider courageously assailed the monsters and ended by slaying them, but the greatness of the task caused him to faint, and when Arthur came up he found him, to all appearance, dead. The king was much concerned, and reproached himself for his delay in coming to the aid of the novice. On reaching Glastonbury, therefore, he appointed four-and-twenty monks to say mass for Ider's soul, and amply endowed them with lands, gold and silver, chalices and other ecclesiastical ornaments.

Speaking of this legend Freeman observes: "Such a story is very silly, very mythical; it sounds very much like an interpolation, but it is just possible that William of Malmesbury may have heard it at Glastonbury and written it down, for at least it does not contradict anything in the History of the Kings." Now the same story is told by John Glaston with additional touches and the important variation "Mount of Areynes in North Wales" instead of the "Mount of Frogs, now called Brent Knoll." Very likely *montem ranarum* was a Latinisation of some romancer's "Areynes," which Glaston preferred to retain; and the gloss *nunc dictum Brentecnol* may very well be an interpolation.

Glaston's honesty or inadvertence deprives the tale of the greater part of its local interest, but he compensates for this loss, in some degree, by stating that among the lands bestowed on the Abbey by Arthur were Brent Marsh

and the Poldens, the former of which, at any rate, may have been included in the domain of the pestiferous giants. These lands, he adds, the pagan Saxons, occupying the country, took away, but afterwards, being converted to the faith of Christ, restored. In the light of these claims it becomes intelligible why the monks of Glastonbury in Malmesbury's time, or perhaps later, should have made Brent Knoll the scene of the adventure; and there is no denying that the story in its original form hangs together much better than in the younger version in which Ider's achievement takes place in North Wales. Nevertheless, it is far more natural that Ider should have displayed his prowess in his native land; and it looks as if Glastonbury was dragged into the story for the purpose of bolstering up certain rights or pretensions which had not the support of a legal title.

Who was Ider? Malory mentions him as a very gallant knight, who greatly distinguished himself in Arthur's campaign against the Romans. In Wace's *Brut* and in the romance of *Erec et Enide* he is called Yder le fils Nut or Nu; and in the latter story he is the discredited antagonist of Erec. The Glastonbury monks must have got the story from a French source, for in the tale of *Geraint the Son of Erbin*, in which the same incident occurs, Ider has his true Welsh name, Edeyrn ab Nudd. Tennyson, in his *Geraint and Enid*, calls him Edyrn. Practically this embraces all that is known about him.

Brent Knoll, which is 450 feet above the level of the sea, is easily visible from the Glastonbury Tor, where it shuts in the western horizon, rising like a gigantic watch-tower between the old town and Burnham, though not quite in a straight line. It may be described with some point as a pendant to the Tor, and, like it, in earlier days was surrounded with marshes and shallow water, or, as Freeman expresses it, "then doubtless, like our other knolls, great and small, an island." On its crown is a prehistoric fort, once believed to be Roman. It is a fact that Roman coins have been dug up on the spot, but this

is of no particular value as evidence of origin. Collinson speaks of the fort as "a large double irregular entrenchment," which is, to say the least, not suggestive of Roman construction.

In his *Brent Knoll: a Poem,* the Rev. Henry Farr Yeatman alludes to

> The giddy throng, sweet-singing village maids,
> Seeking with bleachèd pail thy cooling grot,
> Sweet Lady of the Well.

He explains in a note: "A beautiful spring so called; dedicated (probably by the monks who lived here under the Abbot of Glastonbury) to the Virgin Mary." The Church of Brent Knoll, which is dedicated, like most "high places," to St. Michael, was undoubtedly served from Glastonbury Abbey.

VIII

The Steep Holm

From the summit of Brent Knoll may be obtained a wide view of the Bristol Channel, in which, close to the estuary of the Severn, lie two islets—the Flat Holm and the Steep Holm. The latter is 400 feet high and about a mile and a half in circumference. It is impossible to conceive a more desolate spot, but it is said to have afforded shelter to the "British Jeremiah," Gildas Badonicus, at a time when the incessant conflicts between Britons and Saxons drove the quiet student from his accustomed haunts. Eventually even the Steep Holm did not prove a safe refuge, for it was attacked by pirates. Gildas then retired to Glastonbury, where he ended his days.

It is said that the historian wrote most of his famous work *De Excidio Britanniæ* in his seclusion at the Steep Holm; and, according to Leland, he "preached every Sunday in a church by the sea-shore, which stands in the

country of Pebidiane,[1] at the time of King Trifunus: an innumerable multitude hearing him." "He always wished," adds Leland, "to be a faithful subject to King Arthur. His brother, however, rebelled against that king, unwilling to endure a master. Hueil the Eldest was a perpetual warrior and most famous soldier, who obeyed no king, not even Arthur himself."

The accounts of St. Gildas which have come down to us are most unsatisfactory, and Mr. Stevenson goes so far as to say, "We are unable to speak with certainty as to his parentage, his country, or even his name, the period when he lived, or the works of which he was the author." As we shall find, there is a strong tradition which connects him with Strathclyde. Alban Butler, in his *Lives of the Saints*, distinguishes between Gildas the Wise, the author of *De Excidio Britanniæ*, and Gildas the Albanian, or Scot; and of the latter he tells us that "two islands called Ronech and Ecni afforded him for some time a happy retreat." He further states that, several years later, Gildas withdrew to Glastonbury, where he died. Butler evidently does not consider the two islands "Ronech" and "Ecni" to have been anywhere in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury; and, according to his version, the "desert islands" from which Gildas was driven by Orkney pirates were not identical with them. Nor, so far as Butler's notice is concerned, is there any ground for assuming that they were the Steep and Flat Holms. It is remarkable, however, that Butler declares that Gildas retired to the "desert islands" with the Abbot Cado of Llancarvan. In the Glastonbury story the "desert islands" have no independent existence; "Renech" and "Echni" are the Steep and Flat Holms, Gildas occupying the former and Cadoc the latter. There for seven years they lived frugally on fish and birds' eggs.

Now it is a singular coincidence that Gildas the Wise, whom Mr. Gale has "demonstrated" to have been entirely distinct from Gildas the Albanian,[2] also took up his residence in one of two little islands—off the coast of Brittany.

[1] In South Wales. [2] i.e. the Scot.

"He chose for the place of his retirement," writes Butler, "the little isle of Houac, or Houat, between the coast of Rhuis and the island of Bellisles, four leagues from the latter. Houat exceeds not a league in length; the isle of Hoedre is still smaller, not far distant; both are so barren as to yield nothing but a small quantity of corn." Finally he transferred himself to Rhuis, where he lived under the protection of Guerech, first lord of the Britons about Vannes, who had a daughter named Trifina. The King Trifunus mentioned by Leland seems to have been confused with this lady, or vice versa, for, in spite of Butler, there is no kind of certainty that the Breton is the authentic version.

Butler himself states that Gildas the Wise was the son of a British lord, who placed him, when an infant, in the monastery of St. Iltut. Iltut was still living, and he educated Gildas, who is said to have been the brightest genius in his school. Where was this monastery? Butler tells us that it was in Glamorganshire. The Flat and Steep Holms lie in the channel between Glamorganshire and Somerset; and Gildas "the Albanian" is asserted to have died at Glastonbury. It would seem much more probable that Gildas the Wise should have died there after passing his days in and on both sides of the Bristol Channel.

It is perfectly clear that all these traditions, though terribly confused, refer to one and the same person. The difficulties created by discrepancies of time and place are not peculiar to the case of Gildas—they arise also in connection with Arthur and Merlin, more especially the latter, who belongs to Brittany as much as to Cornwall, Wales and Scotland. These difficulties are not surmounted by the hypothesis of two Merlins and two Gildases. The true solution is to suppose that the traditions relating to such characters were carried into different portions of the Celtic world and there localised by the natural forces of enthusiasm and imagination. As a writer, Butler is not wanting in candour and discrimination, but it would be too much to expect that devout biographer to adopt a

principle which would have the effect of relegating St. Gildas the Wise to the region of myth instead of retaining him in Brittany as an inspiring memory and patron of Vannes. He is said to have migrated to Armorica in 527 at the age of thirty-three, and died in 570 (or, according to another account, in 581) in his beloved Houat.

As any light on this sorely vexed question is useful, the following statement by Mr. Baring-Gould will no doubt be welcomed:

"Some Welsh writers have identified Aneurin-Gildas, the author of the so-called *History of Britain* and the *Increpatio*, with the poet, but the identification will not hold. Stephens, in his posthumous edition of the *Gododin*, tries to make out that the bard was the son of Gildas. But the Welsh genealogies which give the sons of Gildas do not mention an Aneurin. It is quite true that he had a godson of the same name as himself, but he was an Armorican prince, son of Tryphena, daughter of Weroc, Prince of Vannes, and of Conmore, Count of Carhaye and Regent of Domnonia. This godson became a monk of Ruis in the Morbihan, and possibly ended his days at Glastonbury but he cannot have been mixed up with, and fought in the battle in the north of Britain against the Scots."

According to Mr. Baring-Gould, the only Gildas who concerns us in any way was born in 476 or 493, and died in 570.

IX

Bath

Among other statements made concerning Gildas is that he established a school or college at Caer Badon. He is himself often surnamed Badonicus, which naturally suggests that he was a native of the place, although it is usually said that he got the addition owing to the fact that he was born in the year of the Battle of Mount Badon. As has been before pointed out, eminent authorities favour the view

that this great conflict occurred at Badbury Rings in Dorset, whilst Scotland also puts in a claim for the possession of Badon. These, however, are modern assumptions founded on irreconcilable views of history. If one is right, the other must be wrong; it is quite possible that both are wrong, and that, after all, the ancient city of Bath, in Somerset, is the place in question.

Gildas's reference to the battle leaves the matter of its locality open, but Geoffrey of Monmouth clearly indicates that it was fought in the "province of Somerset." The Saxons had been beaten in the Wood of Celidon, and agreed to return to Germany and pay an indemnity; but no sooner had they put to sea than they repented, and, landing at Totnes, ravaged the country as far as the Severn Sea. Thence they marched to the city of Bath and laid siege to it. Arthur had entered upon an expedition against the Scots and Picts, but, desisting from this enterprise, he hastened southwards, and after a stubborn engagement, in which he slew, single-handed, one hundred and seventy of the enemy, succeeded in raising the siege. He then returned to Albania, leaving it to Cador to pursue the Saxons and complete their discomfiture.

Obviously there are fabulous elements in this account, but, as we shall endeavour to show, a Saxon investment of Bath is well within the bounds of probability. Meanwhile it is worthy of remark that Geoffrey makes other references to Bath. He attributes its foundation to King Bladud, who made in it hot baths, dedicated to the goddess Minerva, for the benefit of the public. Merlin also foretells that "the baths of Badon shall grow cold, and their salubrious waters engender death." For Geoffrey, at least, there is only one possible Badon, the city of the Avon.

The Roman name of Bath was Aquæ Solis, or Sulis. Sol was not the sun, but a Celtic goddess identified with Minerva. At the Pump Room there have been found pediments of two buildings containing the emblems of Minerva and Diana the Charioteer respectively. The discovery of these remains seems to dispose of the opinion

recorded by a succession of antiquaries from Camden downwards, that the Abbey occupies the site of the Temple of Minerva. Some Roman edifice, possibly a basilica, may have stood there; and the basilica may have been converted into a church. It is a fact that Roman altars have occasionally been found in Christian churchyards; and at Compton Dando, about seven miles from Bath, there has been built into the north buttress of the east end of the church a slab with two figures, those of Hercules and Apollo.

Between the Abbey and the Pump Room are the remains of the Roman baths, which were of great magnificence, and contributed to enervate the native population in the manner described by Tacitus, who specially refers to the *balnea* as a vicious pleasure. Wordsworth takes up this point in one of his *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, much of which is almost a literal translation from the *Agricola*:

> Watch and be firm! for soul-subduing vice,
> Heart-killing luxury on your steps await,
> Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,
> And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,
> Their radiance through the woods, may yet suffice
> To sap your hardy virtue, and abate
> Your love of Him, upon whose forehead sate
> The crown of thorns; whose life-blood flowed, the price
> Of your redemption. Shun the insidious arts
> That Rome provides, less dreading from her frown
> Than from her wily praise, her peaceful gown,
> Language and letters;—these, though fondly viewed
> As humanising graces, are but parts
> And instruments of deadliest servitude.

That the Christian religion was not unknown at Bath may be regarded as certain, but in perusing the late Prebendary Scarth's monumental *Aquæ Solis*, with its wealth of illustrations, one is impressed by the completely pagan character of the remains—images of the greater gods and the household gods, and all the pantheon with which one has been familiar from schooldays. In addition to these there are certain mysterious *sulevæ* which "appear to have been sylphs, the tutelary divinities of rivers,

fountains, hills, roads, villages and other localities, against whom were especially directed in the fifth and subsequent centuries the anathemas of Christian councils, missionaries and princes." (Roach.)

The picture of Bath which this evidence conjures up is that of a splendid city, whose inhabitants were sunk in Sybaritic indolence and indulgence fully representative of the degeneracy to which the Britons are supposed to have succumbed after several centuries of Roman rule and refinement. Such a place would naturally appear an easy and tempting prey to the Saxons, whose attacks on Britain for many years took the form rather of raids than of systematic conquest. To aggression on the part of the sea-pirates Bath, from its geographical position, was peculiarly open, and in view of its accumulated treasures was not likely to be spared. Green remarks that "rivers were the natural inlets by which the Northern pirates everywhere made their way into the heart of Europe." The expression *propre Sabrinæ ostium* found in the text of Gildas is considered an interpolation, but on broad historical grounds the circumstance to which it points seems the reverse of improbable.[1]

Gildas states that at Mount Badon "took place the last, almost, though not the least, slaughter of our cruel foes, which was (as I am sure) forty-four years and one month after the landing of the Saxons, and also the time of my own nativity." This seems to exclude the possibility of the battle having occurred so late as 516, or even 520—the dates proposed for that event. Gildas may have mistaken by a year or two the date of the Saxons' arrival, but it is not likely that he was guilty of the gross error of supposing that it happened twenty or twenty-five years after the actual time.

The siege of Bath may have been one of the first of Cerdic's adventures in Britain, whither he is said to have come in 495. Six years later he and his son Cynric are said

[1] There are, of course, other "Badons," to which this description would not apply.

to have "sailed round the western part of Britain, which is now called Wessex." Either on the first or second occasion he may have made an attempt on Bath. There is no reason to doubt that the invaders arrived by sea. Geoffrey of Monmouth recognises that, for he says that Cador "would not as yet pursue the Saxons in their flight, but speedily made himself master of their ships, to hinder their getting on board, and manned them with his best soldiers, who were to beat back the pagans in case they should flee thither." It may be noted that in Geoffrey's history the name of the Saxon leader is given as "Cheldric." He is said to have been slain by Cador; nevertheless, we hear of him again as the ally of Modred. It is needless to instance the similarity between "Cerdic" and "Cheldric," the two names being evidently used of the same person.

The value of Geoffrey's testimony may not be great, but Nennius, whose record of the twelve battles is invariably treated with respect, gives in a yet more exaggerated form the story of Arthur's personal feats in the combat of Mount Badon, which Dr. Guest, without hesitation, localises at Bath. It may be added that Geoffrey's *Chronicle*, if not of great historical, is of great literary importance, since it is the source of many traditions, not all Arthurian, which have been crystallised in our finest poetry.

Let us now see how the question of the site of this battlefield acts on, and is acted upon, by that of the battlefield of Llongporth, in which Geraint lost his life. Llongporth (which means a Haven of Ships) has been thought to be either Portsmouth or Langport in Somerset.[1] Good reasons may be assigned for either conjecture, and, whichever be adopted, the Saxon leader was probably the redoubtable Cerdic. Mr. Greswell favours Langport, but, while we do not dispute his conclusion, we are compelled to dissent from his line of argument. "It is in the vicinity of Langport," he writes, "and at the very edge of the tidal overflow of the Parret, in those distant days, that we might look for the site of such a contest. The Saxons

[1] Longport in Kent also has been suggested.

came up from the South and established themselves at such places as Somerset, South Petherton and Ilchester, before their advance upon the coastal regions of the Severn Sea." To us it appears that the opposite was the case, and that, just as the Saxons advanced along the course of the Avon to attack the ancient Roman city of Bath, so they ascended the Parret, aided by the tidal overflow, to assail that other Roman station Ilchester (*Ischalis*), in both which attempts they were defeated.

The Welsh bard Cyndellw twice refers to the Battle of Badon, while that of Llongporth is celebrated by the more famous Llywarch Hên. The Britons were naturally proud of these triumphs, but they were transient incidents in a long and bitter struggle in which ultimate victory lay with the Saxons. According to our former acquaintance, John Glaston, the British collapse took place in Arthur's time. He declares that if Cerdic was vanquished one month, in the next he arose yet keener for the fight; and at last, weary and sick, Arthur granted him Hampshire and Somerset, receiving his homage.

It is quite possible that we have here a bit of real history. Taken in conjunction with Geoffrey's assertion that "Cheldric" allied himself with Modred, Arthur's treacherous nephew, the Glastonbury account suggests that in the final *dénouement* the Saxon leader participated in a conspiracy against his suzerain. Attempts to piece together history from late and suspicious sources may seem rather infructuous, but it is impossible to say whence these statements are ultimately derived. So it were well not to dismiss them offhand as pure guesswork or invention, however overlaid with a tissue of romance.

The capture of Bath by the Saxons occurred in A.D. 577, and was no doubt accompanied by the expulsion of the Britons and the ruin of the city's architectural splendour.

The foundation of Bath by Bladud the magician is outside the circle of Arthurian story, but the place is included in what may be termed the Celtic Wonderland. For any account of this region we shall search in vain the pages

of Malory, who does not once mention Bath. He does, however, name King Bagdemagus and his son Sir Meliagaunce, or, as he calls him later, Sir Meliagrance, who "loved passing well Queen Guenever." From Malory's own statement, it is evident that he borrowed the story of the queen's abduction by that unworthy young knight from Chrétien's poem *Le Chevalier de la Charette*; and here we might have looked for an allusion to Bath. The Welsh writer tells us that Bagdemagus was King of Gore, but he also states that Meliagrance had a castle within seven miles of Westminster, the gift of King Arthur; and it is to this castle that he carries off the fair Guinevere.

In the original tale Meleagant conveys the queen to "the kingdom from which no foreigner returns, but where he must perforce remain in servitude and banishment." This is the kingdom of Goire, or Gore; and its capital is Bade. Near Gore runs "a big broad arm of the sea"—obviously the Bristol Channel—and in the midst of this is an island —Lundy Isle, apparently—on which Meleagant confines Lancelot in a strong tower. He then has the audacity to repair to the court of the injured King Arthur and complain that Lancelot is not there to fight him. After that he repairs homewards, and we read, "That day the king (Bademagu) was holding his court at his city of Bade; it was his birthday, which he celebrated with splendour and generosity, and there were many people of divers sorts gathered with him."

Now it is universally conceded that by "Bade" Chrétien intends Bath; and it is not less certain that "Goire," or "Gore," is a name designating the peninsula of Gwyr, or, as it is called in English, Gower, in Glamorganshire. It is possible that, as in the case of other Welsh names, the term may have been once applied to a wider range of country than at present, but it can hardly have taken in Bath. How then are we to explain King Bademagu holding his court there?

Sir John Rhys considers that we have here a fusion of two Celtic conceptions of the other world. The Meleagant

of this poem is the Maheloas of *Erec et Enide*; and Maheloas, as we have seen, is the Meluas, or Melwas, King of the Aestiva Regio, who carried off Arthur's queen and imprisoned her in Ynyswytryn. The Aestiva Regio, or Land of Summer, is plainly Somerset, which the Welsh named Gwlad yr Hâv, having the same meaning. The Triads, however, speak of a fabulous Land of Summer, whence Hu the Mighty conducted the Kymry to Britain. "Even now," writes Rhys, "the term Gwlad yr Hâv has not completely lost its mythical force and signification of a country somewhere far away to which a troublesome person may be asked to betake himself." Somerset was a land of mystery, but it was also a geographical reality with Bath for its chief city, which is naturally described as the capital of its monarch.

But, as we shall presently learn, Gore was also a land of mystery—a sort of Welsh Avalon or Hades dimly visible from the coast of Somerset. Hence arose confusion. One tradition made Melwas the jailer of Ynyswytryn; another a prince of Gore in Wales. It is proper to observe that, even in the later versions of the story, Melwas (Meleagant, Meliagrance) is the prime mover in the drama, his father Bademagu being only a respectable puppet. It seems not improbable that the name "Bademagu" signifies the Wizard of Bath, and that in this obscure way Bladud is brought into the tale. Geoffrey says of him: "This prince was a very ingenious man, and taught necromancy in his kingdom, nor did he leave off pursuing his magical operations till he attempted to fly to the upper region of the air with wings which he had prepared, and fell down upon the temple of Apollo, in the city of Trinovantum, where he was dashed to pieces." Bladud's knowledge of necromancy may be compared with the captivity of Arthur's subjects in the realm of Bademagu, "reminding us so insistently of the treatment of the Kingdom of Death from which some god or hero finally delivers those in durance." (Comfort.) If Bladud cannot be quite identified with Bademagu, he may at least have suggested that

character so curiously combining the rôles of King of Hades and ruler of Bath: Bladud himself is supposed to have lived in the time of the Prophet Elisha. We are dealing, however, with romance, and no anachronism need prevent us from finding in him the prototype of a somewhat shadowy personage, who is represented as a contemporary of Arthur.[1]

In the romances Arthur is often said to proceed from Caerlleon to Camelot, or the reverse. This circumstance brings up the subject of the Roman roads, which he would naturally have used in travelling from one capital to the other. Now we find from the fourteenth *Itinerary* of Antonine that from London a military road led through Silchester (*Calleva*) to Caerlleon (*Isca Silurum*); while another struck southwards from Lincoln through Cirencester to Ilchester and the south coast. Ilchester, as we have seen, is within easy distance of Cadbury, or Camelot. These two great roads met at Bath, though originally they did not pass through the city. "The road from Lincoln," says Mr. Alfred J. Taylor, "crosses the valley a mile to the eastward of the city, through the fort-town of Hampton Down; the road from Caerlleon crossing at the fort, although a more direct road to Silchester and London was also carried to the south of the city. The diversion of these roads by the Romans, so far as they can at present be traced, was due to the attraction of the mineral springs, the erection of the baths and the residences surrounding them."

[1] See section on Brittany, *infra*.

SOUTH WALES

I

Caerlleon

In passing from Bath to Caerlleon we exchange a neighbourhood in which the strictly Arthurian interest is relatively slight and insecure for a centre whose Arthurian associations seem endless. And yet, strange to say, Caerlleon, as a capital of the British, may be described almost as an artificial creation. Something has been said in the previous section respecting the influence of Geoffrey of Monmouth on literary tradition. That influence nowhere shows itself more potent than in that writer's transference of Arthur from Cornwall to South Wales.

Stephens, in his *Literature of the Kymry*, remarks: "There is no sufficient warrant for making Arthur the King of the Silures; and the location of that hero at Caerlleon appears to be due to Geoffrey of Monmouth." This is one of Stephens's reasons for concluding that the Arthurian portion of Geoffrey's *Chronicle* was composed in Brittany, since it signalises a wide departure from purely Cymric conceptions as evidenced in the earlier Mabinogion and the bardic writings. In the Hengwrt romance of *St. Greal*, in *Kilhwch and Olwen*, and in *The Dream of Rhonabwy*, Arthur's palace is either at Camelot or at Gelliwic in Cornwall; but in the stories of Owain, Geraint and Peredur, which are *contes d'aventure*, full of ideas of knight-errantry which are foreign to the Welsh genius, Arthur's seat is at Caerlleon. It is the same with the bardic effusions. In the dialogue between Arthur and the eagle, Arthur speaks of the eagle as one who traverses the vales of Cornwall, while the eagle calls Arthur leader of the battles of Cornwall. We have already referred to a similar dialogue between

Arthur and Gwenhwyvar, in which the lady declares that she had seen him at the long table at Gelliwic. To the earlier bards, in fact, Caerlleon is a place of no interest or importance, but with the later bards it is different. Bleddyn Vardd, writing towards the close of the thirteenth century, makes mention of "that best of places, Caerlleon." There must have been something to occasion this change of view, and that, in all probability, is the prominence given to Caerlleon in the Arthurian portions of Geoffrey's *Chronicle*, and his glowing description of the place. In Book X. chap. xii., it is recorded how Arthur decided to keep the Feast of Pentecost at the "City of Legions," and the reasons for his choice are thus stated:

"Besides its great wealth above the other cities, its situation, which was in Glamorganshire upon the River Uske, near the Severn Sea, was most pleasant, and fit for so great a solemnity. For, on one side it was washed by that noble river, so that the kings and princes from the countries beyond the seas might have the convenience of sailing up to it. On the other side, the beauty of the meadows and groves, and magnificence of the royal palaces with lofty gilded roofs that adorned it, made it even rival the grandeur of Rome. It was also famous for two churches, whereof one was built in honour of the martyr Julius and adorned with a choir of virgins, who had devoted themselves wholly to the service of God; but the other, which was founded in memory of St. Aaron, his companion, and maintained a convent of canons, was the third metropolitan church of Britain. Besides, there was a college of two hundred philosophers, who, being learned in astronomy and the other arts, were diligent in observing the stars, and gave Arthur true predictions of the events that would happen at that time. In this place, therefore, which afforded such delights, were preparations made for the ensuing festival."

Such was Caerlleon, as Geoffrey conceived it, at the height of its prosperity. The description naturally strikes us as overdrawn, but it must be remembered that in the

supposed age of Arthur the place was, as Lytton expresses it, "still fresh from the hands of the Romans." Surveying its ruins in the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis found many traces of ancient splendour—"immense palaces, ornamented with gilded roofs in imitation of Roman magnificence, a tower of prodigious size, remarkable hot baths, relics of temples," etc. All this cannot have been false or imaginary. Lytton cites Sir F. Palgrave as remarking that even in the fourteenth century the edifices raised in Britain by the Romans were so numerous and costly as almost to excel any others on this side the Alps.

In Roman times Caerlleon was the station of the Second Legion—the *Legio Secunda Augusta*; hence its present name. It is often described as Caerlleon-upon-Usk, which, from an English point of view, seems superfluously exact. To the Welsh, however, there is more than one Caerlleon, since the Cymric name of Chester is Caerlleon Gawr. Chester is considered to have been the station of the Twentieth Legion, which bore the proud title of *Legio Vicesima Valens Victrix*; and the epithet *gawr*, as the Welsh equivalent of the Latin *valens*, is believed to be due to this circumstance. As differentiating the northern from the southern Caerlleon, it did not always serve its purpose, for we are sometimes told:

Q' li rois cort a cestre tint,

or

The King that time at Cester lay,

where comparison with the original proves that Caerlleon-upon-Usk was the place in question. Geoffrey's *Urbs Legionum* (City of Legions) appears to be a careless translation of the Welsh Caerlleon. The old Roman name was Isca Silurum, or Isca Colonia; and in the age of the Roman occupation, it is said, the city was nine miles in area. Giraldus Cambrensis speaks of "fine walls, parts of which remain standing"; and he goes on to remark: "You will find on all sides, both within and without the circuit of the walls, subterranean structures, aqueducts, under-

ground passages; and, what I think worthy of notice, stones contrived with wonderful art to transmit the heat insensibly through small pipes passing up the side walls." This description suggests a metropolis which has outgrown its walled limits.

That Caerlleon was a place of considerable extent, with a large resident population in addition to the garrison, is a fair inference from the existence of an amphitheatre now called the Round Table. All that can be actually seen of this is a deep hollow in a meadow, but Mr. Baring-Gould is satisfied that it "is really the old amphitheatre."[1] Other remains of the old Roman days include a section of the wall, about twelve feet high, which extends past the Round Table field. When perfect, it is supposed to have been four miles in length and connected Caerlleon with the outposts. One has only to enter the little museum to discover numerous smaller relics which have been from time to time unearthed—baths, altars, tessellated pavements, Roman lamps, bronze ornaments, glass vessels, keys and coins. The Roman coins commence with those of Honorius, A.D. 384–423. It was this emperor who, in 402, recalled the legions whose presence in Britain gave to Caerlleon its name. There are also, strangely enough, Carthaginian coins dating from before the Christian era, which Mr. Baring-Gould considers to have been kept as curiosities or used as charms. It is not impossible, however, that the Carthaginians established an emporium or factory here, and that the Romans followed in their wake. Many urns have been found in Caerlleon ultra Pontem—

[1] Warner tells us in his *Wanderings* (1799) that a certain tavern at Caerlleon in his day boasted a sign "which displays a military figure intended to represent King Arthur, and subscribed with the following lines:

'Twelve hundred years and more are pass'd
Since Arthur rulèd here;
And that to me once more he's come,
Think it not strange, or queere.
Though o'er my door, yet take my word,
To honour you he's able;
And make you welcome with good ale
And Knights of the Round Table.'"

that part of the town beyond the bridge—where, apparently, lay the cemetery of the Roman inhabitants.

Reference may be made also to the Roman roads converging at Caerlleon. From Bath, as we have already seen, the Via Julia ran to Caerlleon, and thence it went on to Neath and Menapia (near St. David's). Another Roman road led from Caerlleon to Abergavenny, and on to Wroxeter, while a third traversed the country to Monmouth, crossed the Wye to Berry Hill, in Weston, whence it continued in a nearly direct line to Gloucester. This road seems to have ended at Lincoln.

The Archbishop of Caerlleon in Arthur's time, who crowned Arthur, was, as Geoffrey states, Dubricius, who had been appointed to that metropolitan see by Aurelius Ambrosius. Malory does not once mention him, but Tennyson revives his lost fame by speaking of him as "Dubric, the high saint, chief of the church in Britain." In *The Coming of Arthur* it is Dubric, or Dubricius, who weds the young king to Guinevere. Historically there appears to be no ground whatever for joining Caerlleon to Canterbury and York as one of the three metropolitan sees in Britain: this was merely a device of Geoffrey for enhancing the dignity of Arthur's capital. "It will have been noticed," writes Mr. Baring-Gould, "that Giraldus Cambrensis speaks of a metropolitan church at Caerlleon, and the story was industriously circulated that this was the seat of an archbishop, and that Dubricius, who crowned King Arthur, was one of those who occupied the archiepiscopal throne here. Later, St. David, who succeeded him, removed the seat to Menevia. But this is *all fable*. There were no archbishops in Britain in those days, and Dubricius never was a bishop in Caerlleon, nor David either."

If Dubricius was not actually Archbishop of Caerlleon, Geoffrey of Monmouth showed discretion in exalting him to that imaginary honour, for the saint belongs to the folklore of the district, and was endowed from his birth with the power of working miracles. According to the *Book of Llandaff*, his grandfather was Pebiaw, King of

Ergyng, or Archenfield, i.e. the portion of Herefordshire south-west of the River Wye. Pebiaw was a very mad king, who came in conflict with Rhitta Gawr, Malory's King Ryons of North Wales, to whom he forfeited his beard. This little potentate had a daughter named Eurddil, who, he was enraged to discover, was about to give birth to a child. So he caused her to be put in a sack and cast headlong into the river. But Eurddil did not drown—she was guided by Divine providence to the bank; and this happened on several subsequent occasions. So Pebiaw resolved that she should be burnt. A funeral pyre was erected, and the unhappy victim deposited on it. The next morning messengers were sent by the king to look for her bones, but they found her holding her son in her lap at a spot since called Madle (Madley) because the holy man had been born there.

Now Pebiaw was called in the British language Claforwg and in the Latin Spumosus, being afflicted with an incurable disease which made him incessantly foam at the mouth, and two persons with handkerchiefs had to be in constant attendance on him. Fortunately for himself, when he learnt that all his efforts to destroy his daughter had been fruitless, he so far relented as to send for the erring Eurddil and her infant, and even fondled and played with the child. The babe, restless under his endearments, placed its little hands against Pebiaw's face and mouth, and in a moment the king was healed of his infirmity.

"Who," concludes the monk of Llandaff, quaintly, "when he knew that he had been healed by the touch of the infant, rejoiced greatly: like one who had come to a harbour after having suffered shipwreck. And he, who at first was as a roaring lion, was now turned to a lamb, and he began to love the infant above all his sons and grandsons; and of that place Madle (that is *Mad*, good, *lle*, place, whence *Madle*, a good place) he made him heir, and also of the whole island, which took its name from his mother, Eurddil, that is, *Ynys Eurddyl*, which by others is called *Maes Mail Lechen*."

Among the treasures in Caerlleon Museum is a boundary-stone which shows that the sea-walls were built by the Roman soldiers in the third century of our era. At that period the sea must have flowed right up to where Caerlleon now stands, but it has since receded so far that the town is now fully two miles inland. As a maritime city of such wealth that, as old Layamon says, "never was he born . . . that could tell of half the richdom (riches) that was in Kairliune," it was just the place to attract the greedy eyes of the roving Saxons, and here, if anywhere, we might expect a struggle between them and the British warriors on whom, after the Roman eagles had been withdrawn, the defence of the country devolved. And so it seems to have fallen out, for Nennius tells us that Arthur's ninth battle "was at the City of Legion, which is called Cair Lion." Whatever doubt may attach to some of the battle-fields named in his list, it does not seem possible to mistake this reference, unless indeed we prefer to believe that Caerlleon Gawr, not Caerlleon-upon-Usk, is intended. Exeter seems out of the question. If, as appears likely, Caerlleon-upon-Usk was the place, and our previous conjectures respecting Mount Badon and Llongporth are correct, we find the Saxons attempting to gain a footing in three Roman settlements—Ilchester, Bath and Caerlleon —all of them accessible from the Bristol Channel.

To these may possibly be added a fourth. There is just a chance that Castle Gurnion, in the neighbourhood of which Arthur fought his eighth battle, is identical with Cair Guorthegirn, the castle or city of Vortigern, previously mentioned by Nennius; and there is also a chance that Cair Guorthegirn was situated at or near Caerwent. This is Usher's suggestion, which, Dr. Guest points out, is in harmony with Geoffrey's account. It may be observed that Dr. Guest himself vacillates in some of his identifications between southern and northern localities. The curiously named stream Trat Treuroit may be the Brue in Somerset or the Ribble in Lancashire; Cat Bregion may be Cadbury in Somerset or Edinburgh. As for Castle

Gurnion, he states that it has been variously supposed to be in Cornwall and Binchester in Durham, but his own view is that most probably it is the Roman station of Garionenum, near Yarmouth, in Norfolk. The similarity of the names is certainly striking, but the conjecture does not fit in with any scheme of Arthur's achievements. If there is a real foundation for the enumeration of Arthur's battles by Nennius, or his editor Mark the Hermit, it seems consistent to find sites for the whole of the twelve engagements either in the south or in the north. In such an attempt the partisans of the North Country have perhaps rather the advantage, but if Arthur's rôle was that of the antagonist of the West Saxon King Cerdic, it is futile to place the scenes of his encounters in regions so far remote as Norfolk or Strathclyde. As Pendragon or generalissimo of the British, he might indeed have fought in any part of the island not firmly in the possession of the English, but the exercise of such power by Arthur may well be thought a romantic exaggeration.

One is conscious of doing considerable violence to what may be termed topographical prepossession in proposing the transfer of Wood Celidon, for example, from the North of England or the Lowlands of Scotland to the vicinity of the Severn, but the term *celidon*, or *calyddon*, is said to mean coverts or thickets, and there may be something in Richard of Cirencester's statement that all the woods of Britain were called "Caledonia." If that be so, the Forest of Dean may conceivably be the Wood Celidon.

Pearson, the author of the *History of England in the Early and Middle Ages*, read the proofs of Stuart Glennie's essay, but was not convinced by it. He wrote: "There seems to me to be fairly good reason for referring Arthur to a district in the South or West of England in spite of the fact that Scotland is distinctly richer in Arthurian localities. The one historical event with which we can almost certainly connect his name is the battle of Mons Badonicus; and this is referred by Gildas to the year 520, when we have reason to think that the West Saxons were

beginning to press on the Britons of Somersetshire, whereas the wars of Ida in the North with the Kymri of the Western Lowlands are ascribed to a later period (A.D. 547) by our earliest notices. . . .

"A sovereign with a certain federal supremacy over Devonshire and Cornwall in the South and Powys and Gwynedd in the North [of Wales] would come into collision with the Saxons along the marshes of Wiltshire and the line of the Severn, and with the people of South Wales (whether Gaelic or Kymric at that time) in Glamorganshire. In those districts may be found localities that correspond pretty exactly to the names of Arthur's battles as given by Nennius: e.g. I should place the four battles *in regione Linnuis* in the district of Llyfni (Glamorganshire); that at Bassas, near Baschurch in Shropshire; that of Urbs Legionis at Caerleon-on-Usk, and that of Mount Badon at Bath."

Mention has been made of Caerwent. The name and character of this Monmouthshire town may supply the clue to a puzzle connected with the *Morte Darthur*. In the preface of that work, William Caxton, arguing for the existence of Arthur as King of Britain, observes: "And yet of record remain in witness of him in Wales, in the town of Camelot, the great stones and the marvellous works of iron lying under the ground, and royal vaults, which divers now living have seen." On the other hand, Caxton's author, when alluding to Camelot, repeatedly adds, "that is, Winchester," or "that is called in English Winchester." Now one thing is quite certain, which is, that Winchester is not in Wales. How are we to explain this manifest contradiction? Sir Edward Strachey tells us that Caxton "probably means Caerleon," but even if we grant that, the other portion of the problem is left unsolved. We are still unenlightened as to the reason of Malory's insistence that Camelot is Winchester.

The confusion may have arisen in this way. Malory or his authority may have been aware that one of Arthur's resorts was a place called Venta. There were three places

of that name in Roman Britain, only two of which concern us here—Venta Belgarum (Winchester) and Venta Silurum (Caerwent). Neither Caxton nor Malory knew where Camelot was, but as Arthur was understood to be connected with Venta, Caxton fixed on Caerwent and Malory on Winchester, and each identified his Venta with the famous Camelot, for which no more likely situation presented itself. Incidents, therefore, which we read of in the *Morte Darthur* as occurring at Winchester may have happened at Caerwent; and Camelot and Winchester being assumed to be identical, the two places between them may have absorbed all that was glorious or romantic in Arthur's relations with Caerwent.

Caerwent was the next station to Caerlleon in the Via Julia and served as a kind of outpost to it, but it appears to have been older and originally more important. Caerlleon owed its greatness to the Romans, but Caerwent seems to have been a native capital. As used at present, the term Gwent applies only to the county of Monmouth, but it formerly embraced the whole of the eastern division of South Wales. There were three subdivisions—Gwent is Coed, Gwent Uch Coed and Gwent Coch yn y Dena, the last being the Forest of Dean. Caerwent, then, was *par excellence* the city of Gwent.

In archæological interest Caerwent is hardly, if at all, inferior to its near neighbour Caerlleon. Leland, who paid a visit to it, speaks of it as "a sumtyme fair and large cyte," having four great gates, "which yet appear." Some time ago a large part of the wall collapsed, and more recently another section, twenty feet in height, was in danger of falling. Fortunately, however, Caerwent has a most useful Exploration Committee, which promptly decided to support the ancient wall with buttresses. On the whole, the walls of Caerwent are in good preservation. They are quadrangular in formation and a mile in extent.

In Tennyson's *Geraint and Enid* we meet with the lines:

> Scarce longer time
> Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
> Before he turn to fall seaward again,
> Pauses.

This is a metaphor which bears the impress of personal observation, and it is interesting to learn that the poet passed some time, in the quietest manner possible, at Caerlleon, where his headquarters were the "Hanbury Arms." Mr. Walters quotes the following account of this visit by a "local chronicler," whose name might with advantage have been forthcoming.

"Quiet and unobtrusive to a degree, he soon attracted attention from his very reserved and exclusive habits. Day after day passed, and his figure was seldom seen. Frequently he would leave the house early in the morning, and go no one knew whither, and on his return retire to his room till next morning. It was soon recognised that the stranger was fond of long walks, and there was not a hill in the neighbourhood up whose sides he did not climb. For a time no companion or friend seemed to notice him, but occasionally a letter arriving at the post-office was delivered to him. At first the name attracted no attention, but at length 'Alfred Tennyson' inscribed on successive missives seemed to have a special interest for the local postmaster. He repeated the name until the familiarity led him to suspect that the stranger was none other than the Poet Laureate, and this ultimately proved correct. On the fact becoming generally known that Tennyson was staying at Caerleon, visitors frequently called upon him, but he endeavoured to maintain his seclusion to the last. . . . In 1859 the result of Tennyson's sojourn at 'Caerwysg' was seen, when he produced to the world his *Idylls of the King*. Some few of the inhabitants still remember the poet."

Whether as the cause or effect of this visit, Tennyson evidently explored, though not perhaps very deeply, Welsh accounts of Arthur and his knights, basing, for instance, his poem *Geraint and Enid* on Lady Guest's translation

of the Mabinogion, but toning down Welsh spelling to suit English readers. In the *Morte Darthur*, to which, of course, the poet was much indebted, the story of Arthur has a cosmopolitan aspect. By little incidental touches Tennyson brought back something, but not a great deal, of the original Celtic colour. We have noticed his preference of the form "Edyrn" to the Romance "Yder"; and the reinstitution of "Dubric, the high saint," to his place of honour and renown. In *Gareth and Lynette* the lad is told:

> How once the wandering forester at dawn,
> Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas
> On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King,
> A naked babe.

And in *Geraint and Enid* the "kindly mother" says to Enid that:

> She never yet had seen her half so fair;
> And call'd her like that maiden in the tale
> Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of flowers.

Gwydion was a Celtic divinity, afterwards regarded as a famous astrologer and enchanter; and Tennyson's allusion comes from a composition entitled *Kadeir Kerridwen*, attributed to Taliesin:

> Gwydion, the son of Don, of toil severe,
> Formed a woman out of flowers.

He was classed with Gwyn ab Nudd and Idris, the latter of whom has given his name to a mountain in Merioneth to which Tennyson refers earlier in the poem:

> He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
> Himself beyond the rest pushing could move
> The chair of Idris.

There are other pure Welsh elements in the *Idylls of the King*, to which attention will be drawn hereafter, but these examples will establish our point that the poet imparts to the legends a Welsh flavour entirely missing in Malory.

II

Gloucester and the Forest of Dean

The Forest of Dean, a great coal-mining district, does not seem promising as a hunting-ground of Celtic romance. The name has quite an English look, and the region is outside the present confines of Wales. The casual reader therefore may experience something of a shock on finding the Forest of Dean mentioned in close connection with Caerlleon. Tennyson, however, writes:

> For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
> Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
> There on a day, he sitting high in hall,
> Before him came a forester of Dean,
> Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart
> Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,
> First seen that day.

The result is that Arthur goes a-hunting in the Forest of Dean. Although we have found it convenient, as a rule, to observe existing geographical divisions, the Severn is the natural boundary between England and Wales; and Monmouthshire, politically in England, is by general consent regarded as part of Wales. We may here remind the reader of what has been stated in a previous page, that the ancient Welsh province of Gwent included the Forest of Dean, which was known as Gwent Coch yn y Dena—"the Red Gwent in the Deans." The soil being ferruginous, it is supposed that the term "red" is due to that circumstance. As for Gloucester, it is true that the city is a little to the east of the Severn, but for our purposes it is essentially Celtic and Arthurian. Its Welsh name is Caer Loyw; and it was, and is, the chief town in the neighbourhood of the Forest of Dean, which, says Giraldus Cambrensis, "amply supplied Gloucester with iron and venison."

As has been stated above, Tennyson based his idyll *Geraint and Enid* on the story in the Mabinogion; and the Forester of Dean was not invented by him, but taken

bodily from the Welsh tale. Here the whole atmosphere is Welsh. Ignoring quite properly Saxon or Norman appropriation of large slices of his country, the romancer shows the Forest of Dean as Arthur's own, and the foresters are Welsh to the core. "I know thee not," said Arthur to the tall, fair-headed youth who on a Whit-Tuesday stood in dainty vesture before him at Caerlleon. "It is a marvel to me," was the reply, "that thou dost not know me. I am one of thy foresters, Lord, in the Forest of Dean, and my name is Madawc, the son of Twrgadarn."

Nennius ascribes the foundation of Gloucester to the four sons of Gloui, an ancestor of Vortigern, while Geoffrey of Monmouth asserts that Kaerglou was built by the Emperor Claudius and called after him, or else after his son Gloius, "Duke of Dimetia." It was on this spot that the marriage between Arviragus and Claudius's daughter Genuissa was celebrated, and the city was designed to be a perpetual memorial of the alliance. It would be idle to attach much importance to any of these statements, but the present name of the city, compounded of Celtic or quasi-Celtic and Latin elements, proves it to have been at once a British settlement and a Roman station. Beyond that we cannot go.[1]

Welsh legends make Gloucester rather uncanny. In the tale of *Peredur the Son of Evrauc*, that hero encounters in a certain castle nine witches of Gloucester. This interesting bevy seems to have been only a small detachment of the sorceresses with whom the city abounded. They had, in fact, a "palace" there, whither one of the hags conducted Peredur to learn chivalry and the use of arms.

A large part of the tale of *Kilhwch and Olwen* is taken up with the quest for Mabon, the son of Modron, who is needed in the chase of the boar Trwyth. Information of his whereabouts is at length obtained from the Salmon of Llyn Llyw, who is asked in his turn if he knows aught concerning Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken

[1] The derivation of Gloucester from Claudius, however, seems not impossible; see p. 84.

away at three nights old from his mother. The fish replies: "As much as I know I will teli thee. With every tide I go along the river upwards until I come to the walls of Gloucester; and there have I found such wrong as I never found elsewhere; and to the end that ye may give credence thereto, let one of you go thither upon each of my two shoulders." The story continues: "So Kai and Gwrhyr Gwalstawt Ieithoedd went upon the two shoulders of the Salmon, and they proceeded until they came to the wall of the prison, and they heard a great wailing and lamenting from the dungeon. Said Gwrhyr, 'Who is it that laments in this house of stone?' 'Alas, there is reason enough for whoever is here to lament. It is Mabon the son of Modron who is here imprisoned; and no imprisonment was ever so grievous as mine, neither that of Llud Llaw Ereint, nor that of Greid the son of Eri.' 'Hast thou any hope of being released for gold or for silver, or for any gifts of wealth, or through battle and fighting?' 'By fighting will whatever I may gain be obtained.'

"Then they went thence and returned to Arthur, and they told him where Mabon the son of Modron was imprisoned. And Arthur summoned the warriors of the island, and they journeyed as far as Gloucester, to the place where Mabon was in prison. Kai and Bedwyr went upon the shoulders of the fish, whilst the warriors attacked the castle. And Kai broke through the wall into the dungeon, and brought away the prisoner upon his back, whilst the fight was going on between the warriors. And Arthur returned home, and Mabon with him at liberty."

The Mabinogi is a romantic version of an ancient myth. In the Triads Mabon is named as one of the three supreme prisoners of the island of Britain. They speak of him, however, as Madog, or Madawg, the son of Medron; and in one of them it is stated that his family shared his mysterious captivity, which took place, not at Gloucester, but among the Gwyddyl Ffichti, or Picts, in Alban. As is the case with other characters associated with Arthur, Mabon was in the first instance a god. He was identified

with Apollo; and a monument to Apollo Maponos has been discovered at Hexham. It is about four feet high, and the lettering is said to be very fine. Two other inscriptions referring to the god have been found—one in the parish of Ainstable, Cumberland, and the other at Ribchester, near Blackburn, Lancashire. The latter is especially notable, being cut on a fine piece of sculpture made for the well-being (*pro salute*) of the votaries.

Now the name Mabon, or Maponos, is derived from *mapo-s*, the Old Welsh *map* and the modern Welsh *mab*, which means a boy or youth; just as the Welsh *gwron*, a hero, is formed from *gwr*, a man. Mabon, a glorified youth, is evidently analogous to Apollo, "ever young and fair"; and the statues of the Roman divinity furnish some idea of Mabon as he struck the Celtic imagination. He was the personification of health and strength, to whom his worshippers turned for the continuance or restoration of those blessings. Professor Rhys, to whom we owe these particulars, points out that in Irish mythology the Ultonian hero Cúchulainn was always beardless, "which," he archly observes, "his admirers of the other sex sometimes excused by pretending to believe that he was young."

Mabon is invariably called the son of Modron. This was the name of his mother, from between whom and the wall he was stolen, when three nights old, and spirited away none knew whither. "Modron," says Sir John Rhys, "implies a stem *modr*, the reflex of the Latin *mater*, English *mother*; moreover, it is the exact equivalent of the Gaulish word *Matrona*, the name of the river (more correctly, perhaps, of the goddess of the river) now called the Marne."

It has been said that Mabon was the Celtic Apollo, but he had something in common also with Apollo's sister Artemis, the goddess of the chase. Mabon figures in the Mabinogion as a mighty hunter, without whose powerful assistance, it was thought, the fierce and indefatigable boar could not be hunted down. Only Mabon could hunt with the marvellous hound Drudwyn, the whelp of Greid;

only Mabon was fit to ride Gwynn Mygdwn, the horse of Gweddw, "as swift as the wave."

No light is thrown on the cause or duration of Mabon's imprisonment at Gloucester, which was unspeakably severe. It has been compared with Apollo's bondage (which lasted nine years) in the house of Admetus, but Admetus was Apollo's friend, and, being compelled to serve a mortal for having slain a Cyclops, naturally chose one whom he had obliged. Comparative mythology takes small account of such divergencies, however; and it may be that they are produced by differences of national genius, the Celtic spirit loving mystery as the Greek mind sought clearness and definition.

The Llyn Llyw (or Llyn Lliwan, as it is termed later), in which the talking Salmon performed his journeys and near which Twrch Trwyth was to be plunged in the Severn, was a lagoon not far from the mouth of the Wye, so renowned for its picturesque scenery. In the Middle Ages it ranked among the Wonders of Britain; and a treatise on that subject, which forms an appendix of some copies of Nennius, contains the following account of the river:

"There is another wonder, which is Oper Linn Livan [Aber Llyn Llivan?], the mouth of which river opens into the Severn; and when the tide flows into the Severn, the sea in like manner flows into the mouth of the above-named river, and is received into a pool at its mouth, as into a gulf, and does not proceed higher up. And there is a beach near the river, and when the tide is in the Severn, that beach is not covered; and when the sea and the Severn recede, then the pool Livan disgorges all that it had swallowed from the sea, and that beach is covered therewith, and it discharges and pours it out in one wave, in size like to a mountain. And if there should be the whole army of all that country there, and they should turn their faces towards the wave, it would draw the army to it by force, their clothes being full of moisture, and their horses would be drawn in like manner. But should the army turn their

backs towards the wave, it will not injure them. And when the sea has receded, then the whole beach which the wave had covered is left bare again, and the sea retires from it."[1]

III

Glamorgan

Of the three supreme prisoners of the island of Britain, two—Mabon and Gwair—were the objects of Arthur's solicitude. The former he happily delivered from his direful captivity, but misfortune apparently waited on Arthur's attempts to rescue the melancholy Gwair, who is cited by the Welsh poets as the type of extreme misery. Persons bereaved of their friends are said to become like unto Gwair the son of Gwestyl. His fate, and Arthur's enterprise to succour him, form the subject of a very obscure mythological poem, *The Spoils of Annwn*, of which the opening stanza is as follows:

> Praise to the Lord, Supreme Ruler of the high region:
> When the chief went beyond the shore of the world,
> Complete was the prison of Gwair in Caer Sidi,
> Through the permission of Pwyll and Pryderi
> No one before him went to it;
> A heavy blue chain firmly held the youth,
> And for the spoils of Annwn gloomily he sings,
> And till doom shall he continue his lay.

Arthur sailed in his ship *Prydwen* to Caer Sidi with a numerous company—"thrice the fulness of *Prydwen*"—but only seven returned. Caer Sidi and Annwn are identical, and Annwn is the Welsh Hell or Hades, of which Pwyll and Pryderi are represented as the keepers. Now one of the stories in the Mabinogion is entitled *Pwyll Prince of Dyved*; and we are told that this monarch, meeting Arawn, King of Annwn, in the vale of Cuch, between Pembroke and Carmarthenshire, agrees to exchange dominions with

[1] See Geoffrey of Monmouth, Book IX. chap. 7, for a similar description.

him for a year. He weds Rhiannon, daughter of Heveydd Hên, who was the son of Bleiddan Sant of Glamorgan; and there is born to them a son Pryderi, who, like Mabon, is mysteriously carried away from his mother almost as soon as he is born, and is discovered by Teirnyon Twryv Vliant, Lord of Gwent is Coed (see p. 120), at his door. Having been restored to his parents, Pryderi is entrusted to the care of Pendaran Dyved (who, as we learn from the Triads, was chief of a great Welsh tribe occupying Dyved, Gower in Glamorgan, and Cardigan), and finally succeeds his father. If we are to rely on this tale, Pwyll, after his one year of residence in Annwn, was only titular chief of that kingdom, but in the poem he and his son are mentioned in a way that suggests that they were the permanent rulers of the abode of Hades.

Amidst much confusion, one fact stands out clearly—that Annwn was not located within the region of Dyved. By Dyved is now understood only the county of Pembroke, but in ancient times the territory thus named included those of Carmarthen and Cardigan. Dyved was therefore the western, as Gwent was the eastern, division of South Wales—with these exceptions: that part of Cardigan was always known as Ceredigiawn, whilst a third of Carmarthenshire was in the district of Rheged, afterwards called "Cantrev Bychan and Kidwelly."

If Annwn was not in Dyved, where was it? There seems to be no reason to doubt that the two kingdoms were adjacent,[1] and the region nearest Dyved, in the larger sense of the term, was, on the southern side, the country of Swansea. This was precisely the Land of Gore. We have already referred to Gwanas Gwyr (the Point of Gower) as the Welsh Avalon, but more remains to be said on the subject. In the first place, Malory mentions a King Brandegore, which leads Sir John Rhys to suspect a connection

[1] "And by reason of his having dwelt that year in Annwvyn and having ruled there so prosperously and *united* the two kingdoms in one day by his valour and prowess, he lost the name of Pwyll Prince of Dyved, and was called Pwyll Chief of Annwvyn."—*Pwyll Prince of Dyved.*

between Gower and the "dark divinity" Bran, possessor of the magic cauldron.[1] Then, again, the husband of Morgan le Fay, who was endued with the terrible power of turning men into stone, marries Urien (Uriens, Urience), whom Malory calls King of Gore. It seems possible, however, that he owed this title to his wife, since Malory writes as if Morgan le Fay were Queen of Gore in her own right:

"And so she departed into the country of Gore, and there was she richly received, and made her castles and towns passing strong, for always she drad much King Arthur." (Book IV. chap. xv.)[2]

It must not be forgotten, however, that in Welsh tradition Urien of Rheged, who fought against the Angles of Bernicia in the latter half of the sixth century, is represented as coming southwards and driving out the Goidels from the districts of Gower and Kidwelly. As we have seen, there was a southern as well as a northern Rheged.

Still, in her mystical character as Queen of Fairyland, Morgan le Fay may be considered to have been associated with the spiritualised Land of Gore in a sense that does not apply to the historical or traditional warrior assigned to her for a husband. Rhys believes that the idea of Gower being part of the other world was really Cornish. Accessible to the Welsh by land, it would have been beyond the sea to the inhabitants of Cornwall; and Celts always thought of Hades as transmarine. The story of Morgan le Fay taking refuge in her realm of Gore from the wrath of King Arthur he also holds to be Cornish; and it is needless to point out that it has quite a different significance if Gore is understood as Faërie rather than as a Brythonic province reclaimed by Urien from the Goidels. Once more, Melwas is stated to be a Cornish spelling or pronunciation of the Welsh Maelwas, so that the legend of Guinevere's abduction by the King or Prince of Gore may be of Cornish

[1] See above, p. 80.

[2] The name of the county *Glamorgan* (Welsh *Morgannwg*) is worth noting in this context. Some say that it is derived from a Pictish king, or *mórmær*, presumably called Morgan.

origin. We need not be careful to reconcile the discrepancy between the two legends, which are clearly independent, but, were this necessary, it might be remarked that in the tale of *Pwyll Prince of Dyved* mention is made of *two* Kings of Hades, who are on the worst of terms.

Rhiannon, Pwyll's wife, it will be recollected, sprang from a family connected with Glamorgan. Now the name Morgan, which would be written more correctly Morgen, means offspring of the sea; and if Rhys is right in identifying Rhiannon with Vivien, she too belongs to the same spiritual sisterhood whose proper residence was the peninsula of Gower. "The Lady of the Lake associated with Pelleas," he writes, "may be compared with Rhiannon, wife of Pwyll. Even the names of the former, distorted as they are to Nyene in Malory and Niviene in the Huth *Merlin*, admit of being traced back by easy steps of misreading and miscopying to that of Rhiannon, which in the twelfth century and later would be written Riannon. . . . See also the preface to the Huth *Merlin*, p. xlv, where preference is given to Ninienne over Nivienne, and where such forms as Niniane, Niniene, Nimenne, Nimainne, Jumenne are mentioned; also Viviane and Vivienne, the worst and most popular in print." Here we have a sort of irregular pedigree of the name Vivien, and also of the name Nimue, by which the Lady of the Lake is regularly indicated in the Globe edition of the *Morte Darthur*. The vagaries of the name are equal to those of the owner. Vivien may very well be Rhiannon, whose magic horse could not be approached by Pwyll's swiftest steed. "Of a truth," exclaims the prince, "there must be some *illusion* here."

Let us return for a moment to the captive Gwair. One Triad informs us that the unlucky Welshman was confined in the prison of Oeth and Anoeth. We find this place referred to in various contexts. Thus, in a double Triad, the genuineness of which is doubted by Stephens, one more exalted than Gwair—namely Arthur himself—is said to have been for three nights in Caer Oeth and Anoeth, whence he was released by the youth Goren, the son of

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Constantine, his cousin. So likewise in the Mabinogi *Kilhwch and Olwen*, the porter, Glewlwyd Gavaelvawr, after boasting of his travels in three continents, goes on to say, "And I have been in Caer Oeth and Anoeth, and in Caer Nevenhyr; nine supreme sovereigns, handsome men, saw we there, but never did I behold a man of equal dignity with him who is now at the door of the portal."

We find from the Iolo MSS. that the castle was built of the bones of the many Romans slain by Caractacus and his men, those bones having been collected by Manawyddan ab Llyr, who was Rhiannon's second husband. He is the hero of one of the stories in the Mabinogion. The description of Caer Oeth and Anoeth in the Iolo MSS. is as follows:

"It was of a circular form and wonderful magnitude, and the larger bones were on the outer face of the walls, and within the circle many prisons of lesser bones, and other cells under the ground, as places for traitors to their country; this was called the prison of Oeth and Anoeth (open or concealed), in memorial of what the Kymry and Caradoc, their king, had done for their country and race in defeating the Romans as easily when the trees from the shores of the Severn to the banks of the Towy were so completely burnt down, that there was not a sprig left standing large enough for a gnat to stand upon, as when the Britons were protected by their woods.

"And in that prison were confined those who were taken in war as enemies to the race of the Kymry, until the judgment of a court should be obtained upon them; and if it should be found that anyone of those foreigners was practising treachery, he would be burned; if he was taken in open battle, and it should be found true by the judgment of the court, he would be returned to his country in exchange for a Briton; and after that they imprisoned there everyone who should be found a traitor to his country, and was not burned by judgment of the court. They were kept there during their lives; and that prison was demolished several times by the Cæsarians, and the

Kymry would afterwards reconstruct it stronger than before.

"And in the course of a long time the bones became decayed, so that there was no strength in them, and they were reduced to dust. Then they carried the remains and put it on the surface of the ploughed land; and from that time it had astonishing crops of wheat and barley, and of every other grain for many years. Thus it ends."

Where was this ghastly prison? Naturally, in Gwanas Gwyr, or the Point of Gower. Certain lines to which allusion is made in the *Black Book of Carmarthen* speak of Gwanas as the resting-place of Gwrgi and others, among them the Household of Oeth and Anoeth. Although the tradition recorded above makes Caer Oeth and Anoeth a literal prison, it must have assumed in time the character of a mere charnel-house, and from that it passed into the higher conception of the abode of the dead; but throughout its phases Oeth and Anoeth suggested incarceration, "spirits in prison" finally taking the place of immured traitors.

Now as to Caer Sidi. There appear to be two explanations of this name. It may mean the Fortress of the Fairies. This description would suit the residence of Morgan le Fay, Queen of the Land of Gore, and is countenanced by a passage in the *Book of Taliesin*, which recall sglowing Irish accounts of Tir nan Og, the Land of the Young:

> Perfect is my chair in Caer Sidi,
> Nor pest nor age plagues him who dwells therein:
> Manawydan and Pryderi know it.
> Three organs play before a fire;
> Around its corners ocean's currents flow,
> And above it is the fertile fountain
> And sweeter than white wine is the drink thereof.

According to another interpretation, *sidi* means "revolving," so that Caer Sidi might be rendered Turning Castle. The allusion to the "corners" is very striking, for a glance at the map will show that the peninsula of Gower is full of indentations. In the original the term used is *bannen*, which is the plural of *ban*. From this was formed

an adjective *bannauc*—in modern Welsh *bannog*. Now Malory calls the castle in which Pelles lived and kept the Holy Grail Carbonek (or Corbyn). Carbonek looks extremely like Caer Bannauc.

Among Malory's place-names is Ganys—we read of two brothers, Bleoberys and Blamore of Ganys. It seems very probable that Ganys is really Gwanas. But who would have thought of identifying Sarras, a city of Saracens, with Gwanas Gwyr? Rhys, however, does not shrink from the attempt.

"We are by no means certain," he writes, "that the name Sarras may not likewise be a form of the Welsh Gwanas, more distorted than in the case of Ganys. The *rr* cannot create any difficulty, and it is frequently far from easy to distinguish between small *s* and *g* in our manuscripts." It is clear that Gwanas was one of the most remarkable burial-places known to Welsh tradition. On the other hand, the importance of Sarras is very manifest in the pages of Malory, who speaks of it as the City of Sarras possessed of a "spiritual place," wherein were buried Galahad together with Percivale and his sister. It appears as the Spiritual City in Tennyson's *Holy Grail*, where he makes Percivale say:

> Then in a moment when they blazed again, etc.

Finally, reference may be made to a remarkable incident in Balin's short and tragic career. He has a severe conflict with King Pellam, whom he deals a dolorous stroke with a spear found in his own castle, whereupon the roof and walls of the castle break and fall to the earth. King Pellam does not die, but he is doomed to lie sore wounded till Galahad, the haut prince, heals him in the quest of the Sancgreal. "For," proceeds the story, "in that place was part of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that Joseph of Arimathea brought into this land." All this is related in Book II. of the *Morte Darthur*, and the sequel is reserved until we arrive at Book XVII., where, though King Pellam is not mentioned by name, Sir Galahad miraculously heals

a maimed king—evidently the same—in the Castle of Carbonek. King Pellam's castle was, it is plain, constructed of fragile material, and strongly suggests Caer Oeth and Anoeth.[1] It was a place of evil custom, where royal maidens were bled to death, and Galahad and Percivale find within its precincts "threescore fair tombs." Hence, like Gwanas and Sarras, it was remarkable as a burial-place. Malory does not say in so many words that it was the Castle of Carbonek—in this, as in so many instances, he is distressingly vague—but the conclusion may be legitimately drawn from the attendant circumstances.

Thus Annwn, Caer Sidi, Caer Oeth and Anoeth, the Castle of Carbonek, Sarras, may all be located in Gwanas Gwyr, and the right of that peninsula to be styled the Welsh Avalon may be regarded as fully established. The fact that Melwas is connected with both Glastonbury and Gower suggests that they were actually confused.

An element of uncertainty is imported by the circumstance that the Welsh name of Lundy is Ynys Wair, or Gwair's Isle. This makes it highly probable that in old legendary tales the prison of that unhappy man was placed on the island of Lundy.

Before quitting the subject, it may be as well to be more precise on the meaning of *Sidi*. This turns, it would seem, on the question whether the word was pronounced Sidi or Siði (ð = *th*). The Welsh texts do not make this clear. Were it certain that the term is Siði, then we may suppose it to be a word of Irish origin signifying "fairies." In mediæval Erse *aes side* meant "fairy folk," *fer side*, a "male fairy," and *ben side*, a "female fairy"—the familiar "banshee." It is therefore by no means unlikely that Caer Sidi, being interpreted, is the Fortress of the Fairies.

That, however, is not the only instance of possible borrowing from Ireland. As we shall find later, there are indications that the Arthurian legend in its domestic aspects

[1] *Oeth*, Sir John Rhys tells us, appears to have meant "powerful," while *an-oeth* was its negative, denoting "weak, feeble, frivolous." *Caer*, of course, signified castle. The place was also called Carchar (*prison*) Caer Oeth ac Anoeth or just Carchar Oeth ac Anoeth.

bears a suspicious resemblance to the story of Étain. In the neighbourhood of Ardagh, and in the county of Longford, was a *sid*, or mound, the residence of Mider of Bri Léith, one of the many fairy kings of Ireland. Thither he carried off Étain, wife of Eochaid Airem, King of Ireland; and for a whole twelvemonth the distressed monarch sought for her in vain. At length his druid Dalàn, by mystic means, discovered the secret, and Eochaid, marching to Mider's *sid*, began to demolish it. The owner was so terrified that Mider released the beautiful captive. Étain was herself a fairy, and during a previous state of existence had been married to Mider, whose conduct in abducting her was influenced by that circumstance.

Close to the main road between Reynoldstone and Swansea is the famous Arthur's Stone. This dolmen stands on Cefn Bryn, an elevated ridge which commands a wide prospect. At present the capstone measures about fourteen feet in length, seven feet two inches in depth, and about six feet six inches in breadth. Formerly it was considerably larger, pieces having been detached for millstones. By using wedges, local vandals succeeded in breaking off a huge piece thirty feet in circumference; they then desisted from their task, but the damage they begun has been aggravated by wind and rain. The capstone rests on four supports, but besides are several upright stones which are not in contact with the cap. Other dolmens exhibit the same peculiarity, which is explained by Mr. Baring-Gould in an interesting passage of his *Book of South Wales*:

"These structures," he writes, "were family or tribal mausoleums. The supporters were first planted. Then earth and stones were piled up around them on the outside, and finally the capstone was levered on to its place. So long as some of the uprights held it in position, that sufficed. Where the others failed to sustain it, the gaps were filled in with a walling of stones placed horizontally. Then the whole was buried under a huge cairn of stones and earth. I have seen a fine dolmen excavated in the Department of Corrèze, where this filling in was *in situ*. But most of

the superincumbent matter has been removed from our dolmens, with the result that only a few of the uprights were left sustaining the coverer."

Mr. Baring-Gould, who is much at home in this subject, goes on to describe Celtic modes of burial and the care bestowed by survivors on the remains of their kindred:

"After the cairn and its inner chamber were complete, the dead were introduced by an opening at one end. It would seem that in the earliest age the dead were not burnt. Then, on the anniversary of death or interment or on some solemn *jour des morts,* a feast was held on the cairn, and the bones of the deceased were drawn out, scraped and cleaned, no doubt fondled by the relatives, and then replaced, not always in the correct anatomical order, for sometimes a right foot is found placed to a left leg. The marks of the scrapings remain on the bones. But after cremation came in this custom was abandoned; the feasts, however, were doubtless continued."

The only rational ground for associating this fine relic of antiquity with Arthur is by supposing that the Avalon to which he was borne was in the land of Gore. Probably, however, the name Arthur's Stone was given to it as a tribute of admiration to the king in comparatively modern times, after the Welsh had forgotten the testimony of their bards that "the grave of Arthur is unknown."

Cardiff (the Caer or Castle on the Taff) is not without some interesting Arthurian associations, for it was here in a meadow that Geraint and Edyrn jousted for the Sparrow-Hawk. It was at Cardiff too that the Lady Annowre arrived to beguile King Arthur to the Forest Perilous, and, being a great sorceress, partially succeeded in her unworthy aim, being finally routed by a greater sorceress, the Lady of the Lake. And it was from Cardiff that Arthur and his host set sail to make war on Lancelot.

Mr. Walters mentions that "a huge quoin stone with an almost undecipherable *Hic jacet,*" at Llanilterne, near Cardiff, is proclaimed by popular tradition to be Guinevere's monument. It is always well to learn what popular tradition

thinks about these matters, but in this instance a passing reference will probably be deemed sufficient.

Of more serious interest is the story—preserved in the Iolo MSS.—of how the Roll of the Round Table came to Cardiff, and what trouble was caused by its presence there. The Roll had been brought from Brittany by Rhys ab Tewdwr, who began his reign as King of South Wales in 1077. It had nothing to do with chivalry; it contained the ordinances concerning Eisteddvods, at which bards gathered and degrees were conferred on the chiefs of song—not degrees only, but gifts. The "Emperor" Arthur was believed to have taken a great interest in these feasts and competitions, and the revival of the custom on the lines observed at Caerlleon-upon-Usk, when Arthur held his court in that favoured town, marked an epoch. The Roll was deposited in the Church of Cattwg, in Glamorgan, because throughout the isle of Britain that church was universally held sacrosanct. Neither war nor weapons of slaughter might be brought into the parish. The transference of the precious writing from that place of guaranteed security to the assailable Castle of Cardiff was a disaster for the Welsh people, as it led to an extension of Norman power and influence.

Let the tale be told in the words of the old *Chronicle*, aptly translated by Thomas Stephens:

"And Iestyn, the son of Gwrgan, Prince of Glamorgan, took the Roll of the Round Table with him to his new castle in Cardiff under a claim that he was prince of the territory—namely, that of the church and parish of Cattwg, in his dominion—and that the custody of the Roll belonged to him. And because the court of Caerlleon-upon-Usk, which was the court of Arthur, was within his dominions, he asserted that his court was that of Arthur continued down to his time. And so he took the Roll by fraud and by force to Cardiff Castle; and he suffered for that. For Rhys made a hostile expedition against Iestyn, the son of Gwrgan, and defeated him in the battle of Cadlas. Upon which Iestyn, the son of Gwrgan, sent to Robert Fitz-

hamon and the Normans for assistance against Rhys, and slew him in the battle of Cynllwyn Du (the Black Treachery). But the foreigners, having heard what Iestyn had done of violence and devastation, took from him his castle and his territory, and expelled him.

"After that, Robert Earl of Gloucester, the son of Henry, the son of the Red King (William Rufus), married Mabli, the daughter of Robert Fitzhamon, and received the lordship of Glamorgan in right of his wife. He gave presents to the bards in Tir Iarll; and in a hall of his there he placed the Roll of the Round Table, in the custody of the bards of the Island of Britain; and from that time the two systems were united—namely, that of the White Stones and that of the Round Table—as they exist there at present; so that with the bards of the chair of Tir Iarll, more especially than any of the poets of Wales, are the principal systems preserved in their completeness to this day."

IV

"Dyved"

The expression "Dyved," in the larger sense unfolded in the previous section, will serve as a convenient generalisation of the counties of Carmarthen, Pembroke and Cardigan.

Carmarthen, the Roman Moridunum, is the reputed birthplace of Merlin, but even in Wales it has a rival for that doubtful honour. Nennius assigns it to Campus Electi, or Maesaleg, now Bassaleg, near Newport. Geoffrey of Monmouth, however, testifies in favour of Carmarthen; and "thereby hangs a tale."

On the advice of his magicians, says Geoffrey, Vortigern resolved to build him a stronghold on "Mount Erir"—that is, Snowdon—but the work did not prosper. Every day, as fast as they were laid, the foundations were

swallowed up. So Vortigern took counsel of the magicians, who told him that he must find a boy who never had a father and sprinkle the stones and cement with his blood. Messengers were sent out in all directions, and one of the places visited was a city "afterwards called Kaermerdin" (obviously as a compliment to Merlin, whose true Welsh name was Myrddin!). Here the king's servants found some lads playing before the gate, and sat down and watched them. Towards evening two of the lads quarrelled, and one of them said to the other, "Nobody knows who you are, for you never had a father." The messengers thereupon looked earnestly at Merlin and asked the bystanders who he was. They then packed off the boy and his mother to the court, and, on interrogating the latter, Vortigern learned there was indeed some mystery connected with the lad's paternity. Merlin's blood, however, was not shed; he confounded the magicians.

Merlin is one of the characters in Spenser's *Faerie Queen* —a poem more generally admired than widely read. The Arthurian legend as presented in this work exhibits important variations from ordinary accounts. Thus Merlin informs Glancè that Arthur, who "wonns" in the land of Faërie, was stolen from his cradle by false fairies and himself believes that he "by an elf was gotten of a Fay." Truly, however, he was the son of Gorloïs, and brother of Cador, King of Cornwall. Here, probably, is the source of the story, of which Tennyson gives different versions in *The Coming of Arthur* and *Gareth and Lynette*, that Arthur was a foundling wafted from Fairyland.

Spenser also supplies a recital of Merlin's disappearance from among the sons of men which is in many respects quite unlike those found elsewhere. Glancè and the sick damosel, wishing to consult the enchanter, repair to Carmarthen, where Merlin is entombed. The poet knows the exact situation of the underground cavern, and thus advises his reader:

> And if thou happen that same way
> To travel, go to see that dreadful place.

It is an hideous hollow cave (they say)
Under a rock that lies a little space
From the swift Barry [1] tumbling down apace
Amongst the woody hills of Dynevor:
But dare thou not, I charge, in any case,
To enter into that same baleful bower
For fear the cruel fiends should thee devour.

We are told of "a ghastly noise of iron chains and brazen cauldrons" tossed by a thousand sprites, of "loud strokes and ringing sounds," accompanied by frequent groans—all plainly audible to anyone who will lay his ear to the ground. The explanation of the phenomenon is alleged to have been as follows: shortly before his death Merlin intended to surround Carmarthen with a brazen wall, and the task was confided to the sprites beforementioned. Whilst the work was in progress, Merlin was summoned away by the Lady of the Lake, for whom he cherished a deep affection, but he bound the workmen not to relax their labour during his absence. Through the false lady's wile Merlin was buried and compelled to abandon his enterprise, but the fiends are so afraid of him that they go on working day and night to erect the brazen wall.

Between the Annell and Cothi valleys is the forsaken chapel of Pumsaint, or the Five Saints. The top of the hill has somewhat the look of a volcanic crater, down which run open tunnels supposed to have been dug by the Romans in search of gold. In one of these tunnels sleep the Five Saints, who were the sons of Cynyr Farfdrwch, born at a birth, and brothers of Kay, Arthur's sewer. It is said that they took refuge in the adit out of the way of a thunderstorm, and, laying their heads on a stone pillow, fell into a sleep from which they will not awake till Arthur comes back or there shall sit on the throne of St. David's a prelate of a truly apostolic character and high spiritual attainments. The stone on which their heads rested has been worn hollow and turned three times, as is shown by depressions. Eventually it was thrown away. It is now to

[1] *Sic* Globe Edition, but qu. Towy.

be seen near a large tumulus at the entrance to the mines and the Delancothi grounds. As a matter of fact, the hollows are simply mortars which were used to grind the quartz containing particles of gold. Occasional attempts are still made to find the precious metal in this district of South Wales.

Tradition makes St. David uncle to King Arthur. He was the son of a Prince of Ceredigion and a nun of high lineage, whose condition so startled the holy Patrick, who had established a monastery in Mynnyw, or Menevia, that he temporarily lost the power of speech. Thus was fulfilled the latter part of an ancient prophecy: "Menevia shall put on the pall of Caerlleon and the preacher of Ireland shall wax dumb by an infant coming to the birth." The rest of the prediction was accomplished when the babe then unborn had arrived at man's estate and succeeded St. Patrick in his monastery. A great synod was held at Llan Deivi Brefi, and there David made such an impression on the clergy that they forthwith chose him as their bishop. He consented, provided that the see was moved from Caerlleon to Menevia. Mr. Baring-Gould, as we have seen, absolutely denies that there ever was any bishop or archbishop of Caerlleon; nevertheless, the tradition is worth recording.

There was another prophecy, equally interesting, connected with St. David's, which was attributed to Merlin. It ran thus: "A king of England and conqueror of Ireland shall be wounded in this country by a man with a red hand, and die upon Lechlevar on his return through Menevia." Now over the brook where the little bridge leads into the cathedral-yard was once a marble slab, concerning which there was an old legend that, on a certain occasion, when a corpse was borne over it, it had become articulate; so great, however, was the effort that it cracked. In consequence of this exploit, it was ever afterwards called Lechlevar, or the Talking Stone.

The stone was there when Henry II. entered the older church of St. David's on his return from his first victorious

expedition to Ireland. Giraldus Cambrensis relates that the king came in pilgrim weeds and leaning on a staff, and was met outside the door of the cathedral by the canons. As the procession wended its way slowly and solemnly, an old Welsh woman rushed forward and threw herself at Henry's feet, meanwhile uttering loud complaints against the bishop. These had to be interpreted to the king, a process involving some delay; and the old dame, losing patience, exclaimed insolently: "Revenge us this day, Lechlevar! Revenge us and the nation on this man." She was driven away, but, incensed by this treatment, she kept repeating in loud tones to the crowd the well-known prophecy of Merlin.

On comprehending the situation, Henry went up to the stone, gazed fixedly at it, and then walked boldly over it, after which he turned round, and, pointing with his finger at the stone, cried: "Who will any more give credence to the lying Merlin?" Swiftly came a retort from an indignant bystander, unable to bear such a stigma being placed on the famous national seer, "*Thou* art not the king who shall conquer Ireland, or of whom Merlin foretold."

One more prophecy. When Peredur the son of Evrank came out from the cave after slaying the Addanc and cutting off his head, "behold, the three companions were at the entrance; and they saluted Peredur, and told him that there was a prediction that he should slay that monster."[1] The Addanc, or Afanc, was a mysterious aquatic creature who caused terrible floods, till Hu the Mighty came with his horned oxen, which drew the Afanc of the Lake to land, after which the lake burst forth no more. One of the oxen is said to have died at Llan Deivi Brefi, a place already mentioned as the scene of a memorable synod. George Borrow was immensely fascinated by the problem of the Afanc, and in his *Wild Wales* gives us his conclusions on the subject, which are at least ingenious.

"I wondered," he writes, "whether the afanc was the crocodile or the beaver, and speedily had no doubt that the name was originally applied to the crocodile. Have

[1] See Mabinogion for this incident. Peredur = Perceval (or Percivale).

we not the voice of tradition that the afanc was something monstrous? Does it not say that Hu the Mighty, the inventor of husbandry, who brought the Cumry from the Summer Country, drew the old afanc out of the lake of lakes with his four gigantic oxen? Yet have I no doubt that when the crocodiles had disappeared from the lands where the Cumric language was spoken, the name afanc was applied to the beaver, probably his successor, the beaver now called in Cumric *llostlydan*, or the broad-tailed, for tradition's voice is strong that the beaver has at one time been called the afanc."[1]

Borrow then goes on to refer to Llan Deivi Brefi, a small village situated at the entrance of a gorge leading up to some lofty hills to the east, which belong to the same mountain-range as those near Tregaron. He says:

"This secluded gorge or valley is associated with one of the wildest tales of mythology. Here, according to old tradition, died one of the humped oxen of the team of Hu Gadarn. Distracted at having lost its comrade, which perished from the dreadful efforts which it made along with the others in drawing the *afanc hen*, or old crocodile, from the lake of lakes, it fled away from its master and wandered about till, coming to the glen now called Llan Ddewi Brefi, it fell down and perished, after excessive bellowing, from which noise it probably derived its name of Brefi, for Bref, in Cumric, signifies a mighty bellowing or lowing. Horns of enormous size, said to have belonged to this humped ox or bison, were for many years preserved in the church.

"Many will exclaim, 'Who was Hu Gadarn?' Hu Gadarn in the Gwlad yr Haf, or Summer Country, a certain region in the East, perhaps the Crimea, which seems to be a modification of Cumria, taught the Cumry the arts of civilised life, to build comfortable houses, to sow grain and reap, to tame the buffalo and the bison, and turn their mighty strength to profitable account, to construct boats with wicker and the skins of animals, to drain pools

[1] See below, in this chapter, for more on the subject.

and morasses, to cut down forests, cultivate the vine and encourage bees, make wine and mead, frame lutes and fifes and play upon them, compose rhymes and verses, fuse minerals and form them into various instruments and weapons, and to move in masses against their enemies, and finally, when the Summer Country became overpopulated, led an immense multitude of his countrymen across many lands to Britain, a country of forests, in which bears, wolves and bisons wandered, and of morasses and pools full of dreadful efync, or crocodiles, a country inhabited only by a few savage Gauls, but which shortly after the arrival of Hu and his people became a smiling region, forests being thinned, bears and wolves hunted down, efync annihilated, bulls and bisons tamed, corn planted, and pleasant cottages erected. After his death he was worshipped as the God of Agriculture by the Cumry and the Gauls."

Hu Gadarn's rôle, as represented in Welsh folklore, could not be more sympathetically described than in the above passage, but Stephens, who was severely sceptical with regard to the antiquity of the Welsh Triads, nearly all of which he considered to be of mediæval origin, took the view that all the stories concerning Hu had their source in the romance of Charlemagne. In the Mabinogi of Charlemagne (Llyfr Coch o Hergest) he figures as the Emperor of Constantinople. The legend is that, when the Emperor of the West visited him, he found Hu Gadarn ploughing in a field; but the plough was made of gold, and he followed it in a golden chair supported by mules.

Pembrokeshire is famous for a breed of black cattle with long white horns, first cousins of the wild white cattle of Chillingham, which last are thought to be descended from the wild cattle of Scotland, pictured by Hector Boëce as pure white with lionlike manes. It seems that Castle Martin cows—Castle Martin, in the region of Milford Haven, has given its name to the breed—sometimes drop a white calf with black points, just as, conversely, the white Chillingham cows occasionally drop black

calves. In neither case are these freaks permitted to grow up as members of the herd.

The late Professor Rolleston believed that both the Chillingham and the Castle Martin oxen stand for the *Bos primigenius*, bones of which species have been discovered in Pembrokeshire. He was further of opinion that the *Bos primigenius* was not indigenous to Pembrokeshire, but imported by sea-rovers and wanderers from the East. In the Welsh legends there are reminiscences of a white beast with black or red ears. For example, there is the story of the outlaw who had committed a murder and was kept in sanctuary by St. Cadoc for seven years. King Arthur was anxious to arrest the criminal, but long searched for him in vain. At last he was found concealed at Llancarvan. Greatly displeased with St. Cadoc for harbouring the offender, Arthur imposed on him a blood-fine of a hundred cows, and the saint brought the required number of beasts. Seeing, however, that they were of the small red variety, the king would not have them. Only those would he accept that were white behind and with red points.

In his *La Légende Celtique et la Poésie des Cloîtres*, the Vicomte de la Villemarqué has collected perhaps all the circumstances that have been reported of St. Cadoc, the whole forming a charming study to which only one exception can be taken. That is, that, like Souvestre, and perhaps most Breton writers, he is apt to be imaginative. His *Barzas Breiz*, purporting to be the folk-songs of his native province, are, it is well known, only half genuine, being contaminated with numerous interpolations and emendations of his own. So much in passing.

In one of his chapters Villemarqué records the foundation of the Abbey of Llancarvan, the Church of the Stags. Cadoc is said to have received the tonsure at the hands of Dubric; and it was to a wild valley which that bishop had once dwelt in and consecrated that Cadoc retired with his three companions Finian, Macmoïl and Gabran. There he built his famous monastery on the site of Dubric's deserted

cell, which had become the abode of a huge boar, grey with age. Then he journeyed to Rome, and on his return found the monastery a ruin. It was necessary to reconstruct it, and two magnificent stags submitted to be harnessed to the monks' wagons and drew the timber required for the building of the new abbey. Hence the name by which it was ever afterwards known—Llancarvan.

Villemarqué thus recounts the incident in which St. Cadoc came into sharp conflict with Arthur:

Three of Arthur's warriors had been slain by another British king.[1] The murderer, always pursued, without finding any place in which to assure himself of safety, went to seek a refuge at Llancarvan. St. Cadoc, seeing him emaciated with fatigue and in despair, took pity upon him, and fearing less those who can kill the body than those who can destroy the soul, as he says in his proverbs, gave him hospitality, without troubling about the wrath of Arthur. The fugitive passed seven years at Llancarvan, at the end of which time, denounced to the offended monarch, he learned that his adversary was camping on the opposite bank of the Usk, the frontier of Cadoc's domains, with considerable forces under the leadership of Kay and Bedwer, two warriors celebrated in British traditions.

At his entreaty the saint sent a messenger to Arthur with overtures of peace, asking him to submit the difference that had arisen between them to the judgment of certain wise men. "I count," he said, "on your justice. The strength of the eagle is in his claw, the strength of the bear in his arms, the strength of the ring-dove in its wings, the strength of the dog in its teeth, the strength of the young girl in her beauty, the strength of the king in his clemency."

Arthur feared to employ violence against the man of God, and answered that he acquiesced in the demand. A conference then took place, from one bank of the Usk

[1] From a note by the Rev. S. Baring-Gould in the Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall we learn that the malefactor was one Lagessauc, surnamed the Long Hand.

to the other, between the sages of the island of Britain, among whom were remarked David, Teilo, Oudocé (?) and other men replete with understanding, who were one day to be venerated as saints. Arthur, on the one side, standing upright at the entrance of his tent, the staff of command in his hand; Cadoc, on the other, leaning on his abbot's crosier, presided over the discussion. It was long and animated. The wisest were of opinion that the wrongdoer should pay the injured king three oxen as the price of the slaughtered warriors, but the majority carried the day, and it was decided that the offender should pay, instead of three oxen, one hundred cows, the usual price of a wrong done to a king, according to the ancient laws of Britain.

But Arthur found the proposal derisory; and answering it with a demand not less so, he said, "I consent to the reparation offered me, but on one condition, which is that the hundred cows shall have the head and tail red and the rest of the body all white." He wished it to be understood that a crime of *lèse-majesté* cannot be redeemed at any price; and, a fact sufficiently remarkable, the Welsh law-giver, Howel the Good, confirmed his decision.

The offender was on the point of repelling the condition as impossible of fulfilment, when Cadoc induced him to accept it, and to put his trust in God, who always punishes in some striking manner men without mercy.

The prediction could not fail to be accomplished. The saint, having ordered nine young people to bring him a hundred cows, no matter of what colour, no sooner were they in his presence than their heads and tails became red and the rest of their bodies all white. Cadoc hunted them into the stream, and when they were in the middle of the current Kay, Bedwer and other of Arthur's officers, entering the water up to their girdle, took the cows by the horns and led them towards the bank, triumphing at so beautiful a windfall. But ill-gotten goods do not profit, or, as the Breton proverb says, "the Devil's flour becomes bran." Arthur experienced the truth of it. Hardly were

the wonderful cows on the bank than they changed into ferns.

Then the king, opening his eyes, recognised that he had done wrong to the saint by a derisory demand, and bending the knee before him said, "Man of God, forgive me." "I forgive thee," answered the saint, "for I have read in the Gospel these words thou oughtest not to have forgotten, 'Forgive and thou shalt be forgiven.'" All joyful at having obtained mercy—he who would not be merciful—Arthur granted the monastery that had received his adversary a right of asylum for seven years, seven months, and seven days; and he added, "Henceforward if a stranger, after passing this time on Cadoc's ground, wishing to return into his country or to fly to some other shore, is cast back by the tempest on the coast he has left and brought back to his place of refuge, he may be welcomed there and served with joy, and may abide there, if he will, even unto the end of his life."

All the chiefs of Arthur's suite and the elders of the country confirmed this concession, saying together in a loud voice, "Let all hear it; we are witnesses of the words that consecrate the right of asylum. If anyone violate it, may God heap on his head all the scourges written in the Old and the New Law, and may his name be blotted out from the Book of Life. On the other hand, whoever shall maintain it, may he see light upon him all the blessings of the Old and the New Testament, and may his soul enjoy everlasting bliss!"

Cadoc was too good to allow himself to be outdone by Arthur's generosity. He had merely wished to give him a lesson in charity. At a sign of his hand the cows changed into ferns resumed their earlier form, and the king's herdsmen led them to the stall. Thus the law was observed, peace restored between the disunited compatriots, and the humble repentance of a king, a greater miracle than the metamorphosis of a herd into ferns, divinely rewarded.

King Arthur quarrelled also with St. Caranog, who, after labouring with St. Patrick, crossed over to Ceredigion

and made his abode for a time in a cave at Llangranog. He could not, however, get on with his rough old grandfather Ceredig, so he moved first to Archenfield, and afterwards to Cornwall. The trouble between Arthur and Caranog arose over an altar-stone which the latter had brought from Ireland. This the king coveted, but Caranog, rather than suffer the stone to be profaned, cast it into the sea.

Where Cardigan Bay now is there is said to have been a low-lying land, which was overwhelmed by the sea in the fifth century—the Welsh Lyonnesse. Traces of three ancient stone embankments are said to be still visible in the district where this inundation took place, and are known as Sarn Cynvelyn, Sarn y Bwch and Sarn Padrig. There appears to be no doubt, however, that the supposed sea-walls are natural reefs. Mr. Baring-Gould gives some striking extracts from an old Welsh poem relating to the submerged land:

"It was an unrivalled cantref, a fertile plain, a pleasant, populous district, with its gay, celebrated city Mansua, matchless for its strength, its extent and antiquity—now sunk in the unfathomable deep."

Other cities, Caeriolyn, Pendamon and Almuda, were similarly engulfed.

"These once-celebrated marts are no more remembered, the gloomy lasting waters of oblivion have for ever covered them. In that well-cultivated plain once rose the town of ten celebrated churches, and seven more boasted the beauty of their sacred structures, and rivalled them in their costly ornaments and pomp of their public worship. Yet eight sacred fabrics still stand, heaven-preserved, on the extreme edge of the land, on the perilous brink of the deep."

The founder of the principality is said to have been Gwrgan of the Bushy Beard, who was followed by a line of fifteen chieftains, the ruler of Cantref y Gwaelod at the period of the disaster being Gwyddno Garanhir. Hence a common Welsh proverb:

The sigh of Gwyddno Garanhir,
When the sea rolled over his land.

A lyrical poem, in the style of Llywarch Hên, which is to be found in the Myvyrian *Archaiology*, and is attributed to the unhappy monarch himself, vividly depicts his consternation on the morrow of the calamity:

Stand forth, Seithenin, and behold the dwelling of heroes—the plain of Gwyddno the sea covers.
Accursed be the sea-guard, who after his carousal let loose the destroying fountain of the raging deep.
Accursed be the watcher, who after his drunken revelry loosed the fountain of the desolating sea.
A cry from the sea rises above the ramparts; even to heaven does it ascend—after the fierce excess comes the long cessation!
A cry from the sea ascends above the ramparts; even to heaven does the supplication come!—after the excess there ensues restraint!
A cry from the sea awakens one this night!
A cry from the sea arises above the winds!
A cry from the sea impels me from my place of rest this night!
After excess comes the far-extending death.

The circumstances of the tragedy vaguely alluded to in the poem were these: One evening there was a high revelry in Gwyddno's court, and Seithenin, the son of Seithyn Saidi, King of Dyved, was overpowered with wine, so that he was afterwards known as Seithenin the Drunkard. Now it was this officer's duty to look after the embankment and thus to assure the safety of the little realm. The inebriated prince neglected his charge, with the result that during the night the sea broke through the bank and swallowed up the whole of the cantref, wherein were sixteen fortified cities, the finest in Wales, save only Caerlleon-upon-Usk. Such of the inhabitants as escaped fled to Ardudwy and the country of Arvon and the mountains of Eryri (Snowdon) and other desolate places. Among the rest were Gwyddno and his household; but though the king saved his life, he was irretrievably ruined in fortune, and the once-opulent monarch and his only son Elffin, or Elphin, were reduced to eke out a livelihood by the produce of a fishing-weir.

This weir plays an important part in the various legends of that most famous of Welsh bards, Taliesin. However they may differ in other ways, they are consistent in making Gwyddno's weir the starting-point of Taliesin's successful career. The wild, fantastic Mabinogi of Taliesin places the weir between Dyfi and Aberystwyth, and here it was that Elphin, one May Eve, fished up a leathern bag containing the infant bard who was named Radiant Brow. This incident is said to have occurred in the beginning of Arthur's time and of the Round Table.

Instead of making Taliesin the son of Caridwen a witch,[1] and presenting him as a remarkable example of the transmigration of souls, more sober Welsh narratives describe him as the son of St. Henwg, a bard of Caerlleon-upon-Usk; and they state that, when the wild Irish invaded Gower, they carried off Taliesin, but, on the voyage to Ireland, he escaped in a skin coracle, in which he rowed towards land, till he stuck on a pole in the weir of Gwyddno Garanhir. He was introduced to the court of King Arthur, who made him a golden-tongued Knight of the Table Round; and after Arthur's death Taliesin became chief bard to Urien Rheged, at Aberllychwr, in Rheged.

The reputed grave of Taliesin is near Aberystwyth, on the ridge dividing the valley of the Clettwr from that of the Afon Cenlan. Its position is marked by a flat stone and two stone circles. Many years ago, at a meeting of the Cambrian Archæological Association, the cairn, which was the traditional resting-place of Taliesin, was visited and opened. It was found to contain a kistvaen eight feet long by two feet six inches, and about three feet deep, composed of rude stone slabs. One of the coverers, which lay near, measured five feet nine by three feet nine. The kistvaen was empty, save for some earth of a different colour from that of the adjacent soil.

Returning to the scene of Taliesin's birth, it ought perhaps to be observed that there are different versions of the crime and the criminal that precipitated the

[1] Supposed to have been originally the Goddess of Nature.

cataclysm on the west coast of Wales. One of them, which Sir John Rhys pronounces the most primitive, finds the cause in the unstopping of a well, which was the work, not of a carousing prince, but of a malicious damsel. Sir John is disposed to argue for a wide generalisation of diluvian myths, under which he would include stories of the afanc as well as the case before us. Still, he gives a citation from an address by Professor Boyd Dawkins which imparts some degree of geological sanction to the legend:

"It may be interesting to remark further that during the time of the Iberian dominion in Wales the geography of the sea-board was different from what it is now. A forest containing the remains of their domestic oxen that had run wild, and of the indigenous wild animals such as the bear and the red deer, united Anglesey with the mainland, and occupied the shallows of Cardigan Bay known in legend as 'the lost lands of Wales.' It extended southwards from the present sea-margin across the estuary of the Severn to Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. It passed northwards across the Irish Sea off the coast of Cheshire and Lancashire, and occupied Morecambe Bay with a dense growth of oak, Scotch fir, alder, birch and hazel. It ranged seawards beyond the ten-fathom line, and is to be found on most shores beneath the sand-banks and mud-banks, as for example at Rhyl and Cardiff. In Cardigan Bay it excited the admiration of Giraldus de Barri."

It is worthy of note that in the Mabinogi of Branwen, daughter of Llyr, the passage which describes the crossing of Bran and his men from Wales to Ireland speaks of two navigable rivers, the Lli and the Archan, as connecting the two countries. Only since then has the sea "multiplied its realms" between Ireland and Ynys y Kedern—the Island of the Keiri. This suggests that a vague memory of the time when much that is now sea was dry land had been transmitted by the Iberian people to their distant successors.

It is a relief to turn from these perilous speculations to the more poetical aspects of the subjects, which receive

full recognition in an article contributed in the *Monthly Packet* in 1859 and signed "M. B.," which are believed to have been the initials of Miss Bramston, of Winchester. The article is entitled "Aberdovey Legends," and is characterised by the charm of sympathy and imaginative faith which it is not given to everybody to recapture, and instantly appeals even to the most erudite reader. Alluding to the lost lands in Cardigan Bay, she dilates on the "cities with marble wharfs, busy factories and churches whose towers resounded with beautiful peals and chimes of bells." "Mansua is the name of the city on the Dovey; its eastern suburb was at the sand-bank now called Borth; its western stretched far out into the sea." (Borth, Sir John Rhys tells us, stands for *Y Borth*, the Harbour. Once it was Porth Gwyddno, Gwyddno's Harbour.) The writer, having recounted the baseness of the prince who opened the sluices of the sea-wall and let in the ocean on the country and capital, then breaks into an altogether delightful phantasy:

"But though the sea will not give back that fair city to light and air, it is keeping it as a trust but for a time, and even now sometimes, though very rarely, eyes gazing down through the green waters can see not only the fluted glistering sand dotted here and there with shells and tufts of waving sea-weed, but wide streets and costly buildings of that now silent city. Yet not always silent, for now and then will come chimes and peals of bells, sometimes near, sometimes distant, sounding low and sweet, like a call to prayer or as rejoicing for a victory. Even by day these tones arise, but more often they are heard in the long twilight evenings, or by night. English ears have sometimes heard these sounds even before they knew the tale, and fancied they must come from some church among the hills or on the other side of the water, but no such church is there to give the call; the sound and its connection are so pleasant that one does not care to break the spell by seeking for the origin of the legend, as in the idler tales with which that neighbourhood abounds."

Here at Aberdovey we come up against the story of the afanc, this time in association with Arthur. In 1853 the late Mr. Pughe of that place contributed to the *Archæologia Cambrensis* an article on this corner of Merioneth, in which he refers to a legend of Llyn Barfog, which he explains as signifying "The Bearded Lake." Sir John Rhys, however, with more reason, sees in the name a shortened form of *Llyn y Barfog*, "The Lake of the Bearded One, Hairy Monster, Him of the White Beard." Be that as it may, the lake in question lies in a sequestered spot among the mountains behind Aberdovey; and Mr. Pughe thus discourses respecting it:

"The lovers of Cambrian lore are aware that the Triads, in their record of the deluge, affirm that it was occasioned by the mystic Afanc of Llyn, the crocodile of the lake, breaking the banks of Llyn Llion, the Lake of Waters; and the recurrence of that catastrophe was only prevented by Hu Gadarn, the bold man of power, dragging away the afanc by aid of his Ychain Banawg, or large horned oxen. Many a lakelet in our land has put forward its claim to the location of Llyn Llion; amongst the rest, this lake. Be that as it may, King Arthur and his war-horse have the credit amongst the mountaineers here of ridding them of the monster, in place of Hu the Mighty, in proof of which is shown the impression on a neighbouring rock bearing a resemblance to those made by the shoe or hoof of a horse, as having been left there by his charger when our British Hercules was engaged in this redoubtable act of prowess, and this impression has been given the name of Carn March, the hoof of Arthur's horse, which it retains to this day."

Mr. Gethin Jones, on the other hand, believed that Llyn Llion was the Bala Lake through which flows the Dee.

We have seen that the identity of the afanc with the crocodile, which Mr. Pughe assumes, is strongly supported by George Borrow; and it is perhaps deserving of remark that, *à propos* of a Breton legend in which Arthur is represented as encountering a dragon on the sands of

St. Michel, M. Freminville propounds the theory that the dragons mentioned in the legends and stories of the Middle Ages were actually crocodiles. He calls attention to the fact that in the sands at the mouth of the Seine, and at Harfleur and Quillebœuf, entire skeletons of crocodiles have been found in a state only half fossilised. So far as the afanc is concerned, Sir John Rhys decisively rejects the hypothesis that the crocodile is meant. He recalls the circumstance that, in the story of Peredur, the creature casts at everyone who approached it a poisoned spear from behind a pillar, standing at the mouth of the cave which it occupies. Thus in the Mabinogi, at least, the afanc is anthropomorphic or anthropoid—it has hands.

Sir John looks upon *afanc* as the Cymric equivalent of the Erse *abacc*, or *abhac*, which O'Reilly defines as "dwarf, pigmy, manikin; sprite." Making this his starting-point, he conjectures that, from the general meaning of dwarf, the term became restricted to water-dwarfs; finally, the signification of dwarf was lost, and the word came to denote any aquatic monster. In the tale of Peredur it does seem possible that a dwarf is intended, and that dwarf must have been endowed with supernatural strength, otherwise stout oxen would not have been needed to bring him to hand. But under the denomination of afanc, a being of a very different order—something much more like a dragon—appears to haunt the imagination of the Cymry, as shown in their folk-tales.

In a letter dated 1693, Edward Llwyd gives one such tale in connection with Llyn yr Afanc, a pool on the River Conway above Bettws y Coed, and opposite Capel Garmon.

"I suppose," he writes, "it is very probable that you have heard speak of Llyn yr Afanc, the Afanc's pool, and that I therefore need not trouble to inform you where it stands. I think also that you know, if we may trust what the country people say, that it was a girl who enticed the afanc to come out of his abode, namely the pool, so as to be bound with iron chains, whilst he slumbered with his head on her knees, and with the grip of one hand on her

breast. When he woke from his nap, and perceived what had been done to him, he got up suddenly and hurried to his old refuge, taking with him in his claw the breast of his sweetheart. It was then seen that it was well the chain was long enough to be fastened to the oxen that pulled him out of the pool. Thereupon a considerable dispute arose among some of the people, each asserting that he had taken a great weight on himself, and pulled far harder than anyone else. 'No,' said another, 'it is I,' etc. And whilst they were wrangling in this way, the report goes that the afanc answered them and silenced their discontent by saying:

'Oni bac y dai ag a dyn
hi ddaetha'r afarc byth o'r llyn.'

'Had it not been for the oxen pulling,
The afanc had never left the pool.'

"You must understand that some take the afanc to be a corporeal demon; but I am sufficiently satisfied that there is an animal of the same name, which is called in English a beaver."

"Corporeal demon" is a description that would suit the fabulous Grendel, between whom and the afanc there is a provable affinity. We read of this monster in the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*, in which his man-stealing expeditions are set forth, and the hero of which dismembers and kills him. The afanc, on the other hand, does not seem to have been dangerous unless molested, though, as the originator of floods, he was an undesirable neighbour, a pest to be rooted out by any and every means. At first, therefore, we appear to be on the wrong track. Those, however, who are acquainted with the poem or its substance will recollect that Beowulf, after disposing of Grendel, proceeds to assail his dam in her den, which is in a watery abyss, and there he finds the mangled corpse of his late enemy, which had been mysteriously transported from the hall of Heorot, the scene of the combat, to his lair in the flood. Thus the analogy is real and striking. Grendel is not strictly a

dragon, but he has the dragon-nature. He typifies the brute force of barbarism, especially of paganism, as opposed to the sweetness and tranquillity of Christianity and culture.

V

Brecknockshire

One of the "memorials" of Arthur best known to travellers in Wales is to be found five miles south of Brecon, where are twin mountain-peaks known as "Arthur's Chair." There is a tradition that the king summoned his adherents to an assembly on the Brecknockshire Beacons, and unfolded to them his purpose of founding the Knighthood of the Table Round. Huge stones and fragments of rock scattered about on the summit of Pen-y-van—the highest point in South Wales—are pointed out as the ruins of the veritable table. Another so-called "Round Table" is a large cromlech near the park of Mocras Court, while on the edge of Gossmoor lies a stone on which are markings that closely resemble the impressions of four horse-shoes. They are supposed to have been left by the king's horse at the time when Arthur dwelt at Castle Denis and hunted over the moors.

In the tale of *Kilhwch and Olwen* mention is made of Arthur's dog Cavall, which was led by Bedwyr. This animal has made his mark not only in romance, but, according to an ancient tradition, on a stone at Builth. The earliest record of this tradition occurs in the list of marvels of the island of Britain, to which we have previously referred. It runs as follows:

"There is another wonder in the region called Buelt. There is a heap of stones, and one stone laid on the heap having upon it the footmark of a dog. When he hunted the swine Troynt [or Troyt], Cabal, which was the dog of the warrior Arthur, impressed the stone with the print

of his foot, and Arthur afterwards collected a heap of stones beneath the stone in which was the print of his dog's foot, and it is called Carn Cabal. The people come and take away the stone in their hands for the space of a day and a night, and on the next day it is found on its heap."

Cefn Carn Cavall is a mountain in the district of Builth, to the south of Rhayader Gwy, and within sight of the town. It appears to be indebted for its name to the tradition just noted; and among the various "carns" on its summit—some of them of enormous dimensions—one has been found answering to the required description. On it is a stone, about two feet in length and not quite a foot wide, in one side of which is an oval indentation, rounded at the bottom, nearly four inches long by three wide, and about two inches deep. On a brief inspection this might be imagined, without any great strain, to be the print of a dog's foot; but, if it is closely examined, it will be observed that, while there is a faint tracing of the ball of the foot, the divisions of the toes and positions of the claws are not marked. There is, of course, nothing surprising in this lack of definition. However perfectly the foot may have been sculptured, the effect of a thousand winters on this storm-beat height would have been to obliterate the more delicate lines. But we must not be too sure that the resemblance to a dog's foot was ever greater than at present. The stone, it seems, is a species of conglomerate, and there is a sad probability that the cavity was produced, not by Cavall's paw, but by the removal or falling out of a rounded pebble once embedded in the stone.

We have more than once had occasion to refer to Arthur in the character of a hunting-man, but it is safe to assert that never in the whole course of his experience was he led such a dance as he was by Twrch Trwyth, who, Arthur told his warriors, had been a king and had been transformed by God into a swine on account of his sins. His bristles were like silver wire. The king first tried

conclusions with this monster at Esgeir Oervel, in Ireland, where he was with his seven little pigs. With horsemen and footmen, gathered out of all Britain, France, Armorica, Normandy and the Summer Country, Arthur fought the Boar and his progeny nine nights and nine days continuously, without success; not even one little pig was killed. Arthur then offered peace in return for the comb, the razor and the scissors which were between the two ears of Twrch Trwyth. The Boar was filled with indignation at this proposal, and, so far from consenting to give up those precious things, he announced his intention of opening a campaign in Arthur's country. Seeing that the Boar had laid waste the fifth part of Ireland, this threat was not to be taken lightly, so Arthur hastily embarked in *Prydwen*, and all his host with him, so as to give Twrch Trwyth, on his arrival, a fitting reception.

The truculent beast landed at Porth Cleis, in Dyved, and his subsequent movements afford a valuable lesson in the topography of this portion of King Arthur's Country. Porth Cleis, the traditional birthplace of St. David, is a small harbour at the mouth of the River Alun, in Pembrokeshire. It was a favourite landing-place of bands of marauding Gwyddyl Ffichti, or Picts, which so much disturbed the peace of South Wales, and whose ravages the aberrations of Twrch Trwyth may perhaps symbolise.

Arthur was at Mynyw, or St. David's, when the Boar landed; and, before he was aware of it, Twrch Trwyth had gone by to Aber deu Gleddyf, or Milford Haven, and was engaged in destroying the herds of Kynwas Kwrr y Vagyl—possibly at Kynwaston, or Canaston, not far from Narberth. On Arthur's approach he made off in the direction of Preseleu, or the Preselly Mountains; and his course probably took him past Blaengwaith Noe ab Arthur, near Lampeter Valley, and Buarth Arthur, and the Cromlech of Gwal y Filast, or Bwrdd Arthur (Arthur's Table) in the parish of Llanboipy. At the extremity of the Preselly Mountains, the highest range in Pembrokeshire, rises the River Nyver, or Nevern, on the banks of which the British

warriors drew up in battle array; and close to the highest peak of the range, called Preselly Top, is Cwm Kerwyn, where Twrch Trwyth committed dreadful havoc among the champions of Arthur. Within two miles is the rugged summit of Carn Arthur; the opposite eminence to this is called Moel Dyrch, while the neighbouring farm is described as Tre Dyrch. It does not seem likely that these names perpetuate the memory of the great chase, but that is as you please.

On quitting the Preselly Mountains, Twrch Trwyth pursues his way to Aberteivi, or Cardigan Town, where he is lost. He reappears in Dryffryn Llychwr, or Loughor, on the borders of Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan; and the next stage in his progress is to Mynydd Amanw, the lofty heights that divide Brecknock from Carmarthenshire and are variously styled Mynnyd Du and Bannan Sîr Gaer, or the Black Mountain and Carmarthenshire Vans. He then pauses and fights at Dyffryn Amanw, or the valley of the River Amman, which, some few miles from the sea, falls into the Llychwr.

The country here is very Arthurian. On the mountain-range is Gwely Arthur, or Arthur's Bed, a traditional resting-place of ample dimensions. Curiously enough, a stream which rises on the Van and flows into the Tawy below Ystradgynlais is called the Twrch; and in the same neighbourhood is a brook named the Echel. One of the two warriors mentioned as having been slain at Llwch Ewin was Echel Forddwythwl. Moreover, on the Llangadock side of the Black Mountain are Pen Arthur and Coiten Arthur, or Arthur's Quoit. The latter is a large rock—one of two—in the bed of the River Sawdde. It is said to have been thrown by Arthur from the summit of Pen Arthur to where it now lies—a distance of about a mile. The companion rock is alleged to have been flung from the same height by a lady of the period. It was a pebble in her shoe!

Twrch Trwyth penetrated into Ceredigiawn, or Cardiganshire, and then directed his course in an easterly direc-

tion, striking across Carn Cavall and the Brecon Mountains to the mouth of the Wye below Chepstow, where he was intercepted and plunged into the Severn. The terrible Boar next landed in Cornwall, whence he was driven into the deep sea; and after that nothing was heard of him.

The Hunting of Twrch Trwyth is not the only topographical tale in Welsh literature. Among the warriors named in *Kilhwch and Olwen* is a certain Dadweir Dallpenn, concerning whose sow a strange story is told in the Triads, which speak of the owner as Dallweir Dallben. Coll ab Collfrewi, one of the three powerful swineherds of the island of Britain, kept the swine of that personage in the valley of Dallwyr, in Cornwall. One of the swine, Henwen by name, was about to farrow, and the saying went forth that this event would be calamitous to the island of Britain. Accordingly, as in the case of Twrch Trwyth, Arthur assembled his warriors and attempted to destroy her, but the sow burrowed along as far as Penhyn Austin, where she plunged into the sea, landing again at Aberdarogi, in Gwent Iscoed. All the way, both by sea and land, Coll ab Collfrewi held by her bristles.

At Maes Gwenith (Wheatfield), in Gwent, she left three grains of wheat and three bees, and ever since then there has been no wheat and no honey to rival the wheat and honey of Gwent. Thence the sow passed into Dyved, and at Llonnio Llonnwen she left a grain of barley and a little pig; wherefore, from that day to this, the best pigs and the best barley are those of Dyved. From Dyved she proceeded to Arvon (Caernarvonshire), and left a grain of rye at Lleyn, in Arvon. Hence the best rye has been found at Lleyn and at Eivionydd. By the side of Rhiwgyverthwch she left a wolf-cub and a young eaglet, whereof the former was given to Brynach Wyddel, of Dinas Affaraon, and the latter to Benwaedd, the lord of Arllechwedd; and, one is not surprised to learn, there was much talk concerning the wolf of Brynach and the eagle of Benwaedd. Coming to Maen Du, in Arvon, she left a kitten there, which Coll ab Collfrewi took and cast into the Menai. To their sorrow,

the sons of Palug, in Mona (Anglesey), reared this kitten, which became the Palug Cat—one of the three plagues reared in the Isle of Mona; the second being Daronwy, and the third Edwin, King of England.

It is suspected that this grotesque tale is really emblematical of the introduction of wheat and barley into Britain, Coll ab Collfrewi being a culture-hero of the same type as Hu Gadarn, and the sow Henwen a vessel in which various sorts of grain and animals previously unknown were brought to these shores. In one Triad, indeed, the importation of wheat and barley into Britain is distinctly attributed to Coll ab Collfrewi, only oats and rye having been cultivated before his time.

Coll ab Collfrewi, keeper of the marvellous sow, was certainly no common swineherd. He was one of the chief enchanters of the island, who had been taught the magical arts by Rhuddlym Gawr. It is probable that Chaucer alludes to him in the passage of *The House of Fame* dealing with jugglers and magicians:

> There saugh I Colle Tregetour (*Juggler*)
> Upon a table of sygamour
> Pleyen au uncouth thynge to telle;
> Y saugh him carien a wynd-melle
> Under a walshe-note shale.

The Mabinogi of *Math the Son of Mathonwy* is partly topographical, thanks to the movements of the wily Gwydion, who is here represented as an enchanter and brother of the lovesick Gilvaethwy.[1] All three narratives —those of *Kilhwch and Olwen*, *Coll ab Collfrewi* and *Math*—are of porcine interest, and in the last-named pigs are referred to in much the same way as we should now discuss rare quadrupeds from the tropics. They are said to have been sent to Pryderi by Arawn, King of Annwvyn, or Annwn, and the plot centres around Gwydion's unscrupulous bargain by which he obtained the swine in exchange for twelve horses, twelve greyhounds and twelve gilded shields formed of fungus.

[1] On Gwydion, see Introductory.

Math's court was at Caer Dathyl, in Arvon, and the remains of this fortress, well defended by deep moats, are situated on the summit of a hill called Pen y Gaer, about a mile distant from Llanbedr and midway between Llanrwst and Conway. Foundations of circular buildings are still traceable in the neighbourhood.

It was from Caer Dathyl that Gwydion set out on his harmful errand. Directing his course southward, he found Pryderi at a place called Rhuddlan Teivi, where his palace then was. This may possibly be Glan Teivy, about a mile and a half from Cardigan Bridge. Having secured the pigs, Gwydion started on his homeward journey, and passing Mochdrev, or Swine's Town—so named from this circumstance—in Cardiganshire, pushed on to Melenydd, which is a mountain near Llanddewi Ystrad Enni, in Radnorshire, and thence to a second Mochdrev, between Keri and Arwystli, in Montgomeryshire. He then entered the Commot of Mochnant, or Swine's Brook, in Powys. In terms of modern geography, this is partly in Montgomery and partly in Denbighshire. There is a town in the district which is called Castell y Moch where Gwydion no doubt "tarried that night." His next stopping-place was a third Mochdrev, in Denbighshire. This is now a village between Conway and Abergele, and, as the tale intimates, in the ancient Cantrev of Rhos. Gwydion and his attendants then hastened to the highest town of Arllechwedd, where they made a sty for the swine, so that the name of Creuwyryon was given to that town. Arllechwedd, which is mentioned in the itinerary of the marvellous sow, is a name formerly applied to two commots of Arvon—Upper and Lower. In these days they are called Uchav and Isav.

Gwydion then rejoined Math the son of Mathonwy at Caer Dathyl. By this time Pryderi had discovered the gross imposition practised on him, and a battle took place between the two princes "within the two Maenors"—Maenor Penardd and Maenor Coed Alun. The men of the South were routed and fled to Nant Call, a brook crossing the Dolpenmaen and Caernarvon road, about nine miles

from the latter town. (Maenor Coed Alun, now Coed Helen, is near Caernarvon, and Maenor Penardd near Conway.)

Pryderi's army suffered a second defeat, and fled to Dolpenmaen, in the Cantrev of Dunodig (now the Hundred of Eivionydd), where a truce was arranged. The rival armies then marched on together to the Traeth Mawr, to Melenryd, and along the picturesque valley of Ffestiniog to Maen Twrog, where it was resolved to decide the quarrel by single combat, and, "by the magic and charms of Gwydion, Pryderi was slain."

Arthur himself is not named in connection with Gwydion's journey and its sequel, but careful observation of these localities will add considerably to our knowledge of Arthur's Country.

NORTH WALES

I

Caernarvonshire

Readers of the *Morte Darthur* will no doubt have observed that the term "Northgalis" (i.e. North Wales) indicates a territorial entity—not a portion of the principality, the limits of which are vague and determinable at anybody's choice or discretion. There is no corresponding "Southgalis." Probably, therefore, "Northgalis" replaces Gwynnedd, the domain of the great Maelgwn—that is, the *extreme* north of Wales.[1] In a broader sense North Wales consisted of two main divisions—Powys and Gwynedd. Stephens conveniently states that Powys "comprised Radnor, Montgomery and Merionethshire," while "Gwynedd was that portion of North Wales not included in Powys." In *The Dream of Rhonabwy*, Madawc, the son of Maredudd, a contemporary and ally of Henry II., is said to have "possessed Powys within its boundaries, from Porfoed [2] to Gwanan in the uplands of Arwystli" (Plinlimmon); and Gwalchmai, in his elegy on Madawc, declares that the sovereignty of that prince stretched from the top of Plinlimmon to the gates of Caerlleon, or Chester. Powys, however, varied in extent in different ages; the coming of the Saxons and Normans made itself felt in the north as well as in the south of Wales. Powell, in his *History of Wales*, tells us that "Powys, before King Offa's time, reached eastward to the riuers of Dee and Seauerne, with

[1] Strictly speaking "North Wales" is perhaps a relic of Anglo-Saxon nomenclature, in which it was used to describe the country north of the Bristol Channel in contradistinction to "West Wales" or Cornwall. In the romances the meaning of the term appears to be more restricted.

[2] Pulford?

a right line from the end of Broxen hilles to Salop, with all the countrie between Wye and Seauerne . . . but after the making of Offa's ditch the plaine countrie toward Salop being inhabited by Saxons and Normans, Powys was in length from Pulford bridge North-east to the confines of Caerdiganshire, in the parish of Lhanguric in the South-west; and in bredth from the furthest part of Cynelioc westward to Elsmere on the East side."

However we may choose to understand the expression North Wales, it is undeniable that, in an Arthurian sense, "the strongholds of Gwynedd" are the most characteristic portion of that country, and the legends that cluster around Eryri, or Snowdon, are those which most signify. The tale in *Gareth and Lynette*:

> How once the wandering forester at dawn,
> Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
> On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King,
> A naked babe, of whom the Prophet spake
> "He passes to the Isle Avilion,
> He passes and is heal'd and cannot die"—

is, we should say, an invention of the poet, but Tennyson was justified in indulging in this fancy by the circumstance that, in the neighbourhood of Snowdon, myths of Arthur are exceptionally dense and precise. We shall come to them presently. Meanwhile we must return to a story of Merlin that was left half told.

In the Mabinogi of *Llud and Llevelys* mention is made of a terrible conflict between two dragons, a native and a foreign, constituting the second of three unparalleled plagues by which the island of Britain was afflicted. Lludd repaired to his brother Llevelys, King of France, and a very wise man, for counsel; and, in obedience to his directions, he caused a pit to be dug at Oxford, the central point of the island, and in this pit he set a cauldron filled with the best mead and covered with satin. Watching there by night, he beheld the dragons fighting till they were weary, when they fell on the satin and drew it with them to the bottom of the cauldron; and, after they had

drunk the mead, they slept. Lludd then folded the covering around them, and hid them in the securest place in Snowdon —Dinas Emrys—in a kistvaen.

Five centuries passed without more being heard of the imprisoned dragons. At length, however, Vortigern desired to build a castle on the spot where the monsters had lain so long entombed; and it was proposed to sacrifice the boy Merlin, as the magicians could find no better remedy for the strange disappearance of the materials. The lad, however, knew more than all those wise men, whose shallowness he exposed in the presence of Vortigern. Nennius thus records the incident:

"A meeting took place the next day for the purpose of putting him to death. Then the boy said to the king, 'Why have your servants brought me hither?' 'That you may be put to death,' replied the king, 'and that the ground on which my citadel is to stand may be sprinkled with your blood, without which I shall be unable to build it.' 'Who,' said the boy, 'instructed you to do this?' 'My wise men,' answered the king. 'Order them hither,' returned the boy; this being complied with, he questioned them: 'By what means was it revealed to you that this citadel could not be built unless the spot were previously sprinkled with my blood? Speak without disguise, and declare who discovered me to you.'

"Then, turning to the king, 'I will soon,' said he, 'unfold to you everything, but I desire to question your wise men and wish them to disclose to you what is hidden under this pavement.' They acknowledged their ignorance. 'There is,' said he, 'a pool; come and dig.' They did so and found the pool. 'Now,' continued he, 'tell me, what is in it?' But they were ashamed, and made no reply. 'I,' said the boy, 'can discover it to you; there are two vases in the pool.' They examined, and found it so. Continuing his questions, he asked, 'What is in the vases?' They were silent. 'There is a tent in them,' said the boy. 'Separate them and you shall find it so.' This being done by the king's command, there was found in them a folded tent.

The boy, going on with his questions, asked the wise men what was in it. But they not knowing what to reply, 'There are,' said he, 'two serpents, one white and the other red. Unfold the tent.' They obeyed, and two sleeping serpents were discovered. 'Consider attentively,' said the boy, 'what they are doing.'

"The serpents began to struggle with each other; and the white one, raising himself up, threw down the other one into the middle of the tent, and sometimes drove him to the edge of it; and this was repeated thrice. At length the red one, apparently the weaker of the two, recovering his strength, expelled the white one from the tent; and the latter, being pursued through the pool by the red one, disappeared.

"Then the boy, asking the wise men what was signified by this wonderful omen, and they expressing their ignorance, he said to the king, 'I will now unfold to you the meaning of this mystery. The pool is the emblem of this world, and the tent that of your kingdom. The two serpents are two dragons. The red serpent is your dragon, but the white serpent is the dragon of the people who occupy several provinces and districts of Britain, even almost from sea to sea. At length, however, our people shall rise and drive away the Saxon race beyond the sea, whence they originally came. But do you depart from this place, where you are not permitted to erect a citadel. I, to whom Fate has allotted this mansion, shall remain here, whilst to you it is incumbent to seek other provinces, where you may build a fortress.' 'What is your name?' asked the king. 'I am called Ambrose,' returned the boy; and in answer to the king's question 'What is your origin?' he replied, 'A Roman consul was my father.'"

We might have expected that the boy's first answer would have been "Merlin," but the wizard was known as Merlin Emrys (or Ambrose). By what appears to be a clumsy interpolation, Ambrose is explained to be in British "Embresguletic." The latter part of the word denotes the office of supreme ruler, and the name as a whole would

apply to one Ambrose only—Aurelius Ambrosius, who is indeed often referred to as "Emrys Wledig." Geoffrey of Monmouth, who relates the story much less pleasingly, calls the young conjurer "Ambrose Merlin." The incident is of cardinal importance, since, as has been well observed, with it opens the great drama of Arthurian romance. If Arthur was not born on Snowdon, it was the birthplace of his glory.

Local tradition supplies an interesting sequel to the venerable tale recorded by Nennius and Geoffrey. The legend is as follows: After Vortigern had departed, Merlin stayed in the *dinas* for a long time, and, when at last he went away, it was in the company of Emrys Ben-aur, or Ambrosius the Golden-headed. Evidently this personage was Aurelius Ambrosius, between whom and Merlin there seems to have been some not unnatural confusion. On the eve of his setting out, Merlin bestowed all his treasure in a *crochan aur,* or gold cauldron, which he concealed in a cave in the *dinas.* He rolled to the mouth of the cave a huge stone, covered it with earth and sods, and thus made discovery impossible. It appears to have been Merlin's design that this wealth should pass into the hands of some fortunate individual, born whole generations later, who was to be a youth with blue eyes and yellow hair. When the rightful heir arrives a bell will ring, inviting him to enter the cave, which will open of itself the moment his foot touches it. The peasantry around Beddgelert and Manhwynain firmly believed in this legend, and there are strange stories of attempts to discover the hoard, which were frustrated by thunderstorms and portents that scared away the covetous seekers.

Dinas Emrys, formerly known as Din Emreis—the name signifies "the Fortress of Ambrosius"—is near Beddgelert; and Lewis, in his *Topographical Dictionary of Wales,* describes it as an isolated rocky height, with a wide flat summit defended by walls of loose stones. Access is obtainable only on one side, and apparently the entrance was guarded by two towers. Within the enclosure

are the foundations of circular buildings, loose stones forming walls about five feet thick.

Other legends related in the *Brython*, and cited from that periodical by Sir John Rhys, are more intimately connected with King Arthur, whose death is said to have occurred in this neighbourhood. Setting out from Dinas Emrys, the king and his followers crossed Hafod y Borth mountain and arrived at a place above the upper reach of Cwmllan called Tregalan. There they found the enemy, whom they drove up the *bwlch*, or pass, towards Cwm Dyli. Arthur, leading the vanguard, had reached the top of the pass, when the enemy discharged a shower of arrows, and the king fell. His body was buried in the pass, the belief being that, so long as his dust remained there, no enemy might pass that way. A heap of stones called Carnedd Arthur marks, it is said, his burial-place, whilst the pass is named Bwlch y Saethan, or the Pass of the Arrows, in memory of that day's calamity.

After the death of their commander, Arthur's men climbed the ridge of the Lliwedd, and thence they descended into a vast cavern—the Ogof Llancian Eryri, or the Young Men of Snowdonia's Cave. This is situated in the precipitous cliff on the left, near the top of Llyn Llydaw, and known as Cwm Dyli. In that cave, it is said, the warriors still are; they sleep in their armour and wait till Arthur comes again to restore the crown of Britain to the Kymry.[1]

Once upon a time, as the shepherds were collecting their sheep in the Llywedd, one of the animals fell down to a shelf in the precipice. Proceeding to the spot, one of the shepherds made the discovery that the rocky ledge on which he had alighted conducted to the hidden cave of Llancian Eryri. The interior was illuminated; and, looking in, he beheld a countless host of warriors, all of whom were asleep and resting on their arms in readiness for battle. The man, seeing that the inmates were plunged in

[1] It may be as well to state that no such cave has ever been discovered.

slumber, was seized with an irresistible longing to explore the cavern, and was wedging himself through the aperture when his head struck against the bell suspended in the entrance. The noise of the bell-ringing resounded in every coign and cranny of the huge cavern, arousing the sleepers, who all sprang to their feet with a wild clamour; and so terrified was the shepherd that from that day onward he was a chronic invalid. Never since then has anyone been bold enough even to set foot on the ledge leading to the orifice of the grotto.

Before going on to the next topic, it may be expedient to expand the foregoing account of Arthur's last march as regards topographical details. On leaving Dinas Emrys, he ascended Hafod y Borth and crossed the shoulder of the Aran and Braich yr Oen to Cwm Tregalan. In the middle of Cwm Tregalan is a low green hill, or what is termed in Caernarvonshire a *boncyn*. Between the *boncyn* and Clogwyn Du, or the Black Precipice, is a fathomless, or at least unfathomed, bog, in which a town is fabled to have been swallowed up. (The particle *tre* in Tregalan may have suggested the idea.) From the base of Clogwyn Du to Bwlch y Saethan, where Arthur met with his end, is about a mile. To reach the pass from Cwm Tregalan, Arthur must have struck off in a north-easterly direction.

Sir John Rhys only expresses what we feel sure will be the sentiment of most persons, when he describes the North Welsh version of the great king's death as ordinary and commonplace. He endeavours to amend it. "The scene," he writes, "suggests a far more romantic picture: for down below was Llyn Llydaw, with its sequestered isle, connected by means only of a primitive canoe with a shore occupied by men engaged in working the ore of Eryri. Nay, with the eyes of Malory, we seem to watch Bedivere making, with Excalibur in his hands, his three reluctant journeys to the lake ere he yielded it to the arm emerging from the deep. We fancy we behold how 'euyn fast by the banke houed a lytyl barge wyth many fayr ladyes in hit,' which was to carry the wounded Arthur

away to the accompaniment of mourning and loud lamentation; but the legend of the Marchlyn bids us modify Malory's language as to the barge containing many ladies all wearing black hoods, and take our last look at the warrior departing rather in a coracle with three wondrous fair women attending to his wounds."

What was the legend of the Marchlyn? There are in Caernarvonshire two lakes that go by the name of Marchlyn. They lie not far apart, between the Fwnllwyd, in the parish of Llandegai, and the Eledyr, in the parishes of Llanddeiniolen and Llanberis. In a series of articles (in Welsh) on the folklore of Caernarvonshire, Mr. Evan Lloyd Jones tells a story about the Marchlyn Mawr, or Great Horse Lake, which Professor Rhys thus translates:

"The Marchlyn Mawr is surrounded by rocks terrible to look at, and tradition relates how one of the sons of the farmer at Rhiwen, once on a time, when helping a sheep among the rocks to get away, discovered a tremendous cave there; he entered and saw that it was full of treasures and arms of great value; but as it was beginning to grow dark, and as clambering back was a difficult matter even in the light of day, he went home that evening, and next morning, with the grey dawn, he set out again for the cave, when he found it without much trouble. He entered, and began to look about him at the treasures that were there. In the centre of the cave stood a huge table of pure gold, and on the table lay a crown of gold and pearls. He understood at once that they were the crown and treasures of Arthur. He approached the table, and, as he stretched forth his hand to take hold of the crown, he was frightened by an awful noise, the noise, as it were, of a thousand thunders, bursting over his head, and the whole place became as dark as Tartarus. He tried to grope and feel the way out as fast as he could. When he had succeeded in reaching to the middle of the rocks, he cast his eye on the lake, which had been stirred all through, while its white-crested waves dashed through the jagged teeth of the rocks up to the spot on which he stood. But as he

continued looking at the middle of the lake he beheld a coracle containing three women, the fairest that the eyes of men ever fell on. They were being quickly rowed to the mouth of the cave, but the dread aspect of him who rowed was enough to send thrills of horror through the strongest of men. The youth was able somehow to escape home, but no health remained in his constitution after that; and even the mere mention of the Marchlyn in his hearing used to be enough to make him insane."

On the summit of Snowdon was once a cairn, which was sacrilegiously demolished and converted into a kind of tower. This, in its turn, was removed to make room for an hotel. The ancient cairn which was treated with such scant ceremony was called *Carnedd y Cawr*, or the Giant's Cairn. Now a certain poet, born in the parish of Beddgelert and named Rhys Goch Eryri, who is said to have died in 1420, thus testified:

> On the ridge cold and vast,
> There the Giant Ricca lies.

The giant, then, was Ricca, whose name has been spelled in an endless variety of ways—Ricca, Ritta, Rhita, Ryons, Rience, etc. This presumptuous and overweening prince is introduced to our notice in a quaint passage of the *Morte Darthur* (Book I. chap. xxvii.)—too quaint to be modernised:

"This meane whyle came a messager from Kynge Ryons of Northwalys. And Kynge he was of all Ireland and of many Iles. And this was his message gretynge wel Kynge Arthur in this manere wyse sayenge, that Kynge Ryons had discomfyte and ouercome xi Kynges and everyche of hem did hym homage, and that was this, that they gaf hym their berdys clene flayne of, as moche as ther was, wherefor the messager came for Kynge Arthurs berd. For Kyng Ryons had purfyled a mantel with Kinges berdes, and there lacked one place of the mantel, wherfor he sent for his berd or els he wold entre in to his landes and brenne and slee, & neuer leue tyl he haue the hede and the

berd. Wel sayd Arthur thow hast said thy message, the whiche is the most vylaynous and lewdest message that euer man herde sente unto a Kynge. Also thow mayst see, my berd is ful yong yet to make a purfyl of hyt. But telle thow thy Kynge this, I owe hym none homage, ne none of myn elders, but or it be longe to, he shall do me hommage on bothe his kneys, or els he shall lese his hede by the feith of my body, for this is the most shamefullest message that euer I herd speke of. I have aspyed thy Kyng met neuer yet with worshipful man, but telle hym, I wyll haue his hede withoute he doo me homage, thenne the messenger departed."

Neither here nor in a later chapter of the *Morte Darthur*, where Ryons is recorded to have been taken prisoner by the brothers Balin and Balan and brought before Arthur, is any special mention made of Snowdon. According to a somewhat different account in Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, a duel took place between Arthur and "Ritho," *in Aravio monte*, which may well mean Eryri, or Snowdon, where "Ritho's" sepulchre was long preserved. Arthur, at any rate, was victorious in the encounter, slew the giant, and took his beard and spoils.

The full story of the giant-king remains to be told. The process of disbearding royal antagonists seems to have been begun with those eccentric monarchs Nynniaw and Peibiaw, already named in connection with the birth of Dubricius. In the tale of *Kilhwch and Olwen*, we are told that God Almighty turned those foolish kings into horned oxen on account of their sins. They are said elsewhere to be the veritable horned oxen with which Hu Gadarn drew the afanc out of the Lake of Floods. Their chief sin was presumption, to judge from their legend, which is as follows:

There were formerly in Britain two kings named Nynniaw and Peibiaw. As these two ranged the fields one starlight night, Nynniaw said, "See what a beautiful and extensive field I possess." "Where is it?" said Peibiaw. "The whole firmament," replied Nynniaw, "as far as vision

can reach." "And so thou see," said Peibiaw, "what countless herds and flocks of cattle and sheep I have depasturing thy field." "Where are they?" said Nynniaw. "Why, the whole host of stars which thou seest," replied Peibiaw, "and each of golden effulgence, with the moon for their shepherdess to superintend their wanderings." "They shall not graze in my pasture," exclaimed Nynniaw. "They shall," answered Peibiaw. "They shall not," retorted the other; and thus they bandied contradiction until there was wild contention betwixt them, ending in furious war, in which the armies and subjects of both disputants were nearly exterminated.

Hearing of the carnage committed by the maniac kings, Rhitta the Giant, King of North Wales, resolved to make war upon them. Having defeated them, he cut off their beards. Tidings of this degradation were conveyed to the twenty-eight kings of the island of Britain, who were deeply concerned at the outrage inflicted on their order. They therefore combined in a furious attack on Rhitta the Giant, but again Rhitta won, and he celebrated his victory by at once disbearding the hostile kings. Then the kings of the neighbouring countries took the matter up and marched against Rhitta. A terrible combat ensued, but once more Fortune favoured the giant. "This is *my* immense field," he exclaimed. Having caused all the kings forthwith to lose their beards, he pointed to the demented monarchs, and said, "These are the animals that grazed *my* field, but I have driven them out—they shall no longer depasture there." Then he took up the many beards, and out of them made for himself a mantle reaching from head to heel. Now Rhitta was a person twice as large as any other ever seen.

There was a Welsh tradition current at a not very distant date that Rhitta's *gwyddfa*, or mausoleum, was built by each of his men placing a stone on his tomb. The name *y wyddfa* is specifically applied to the mountain, while Eryri is a term describing the district. The latter probably signifies the habitat of the *eryr*, or eagle, whose

former presence in the locality is attested by numerous place-names. Stephens thinks that Eryri is derived, not from Mynydd Eryrod, the Hill of Eagles, but from Mynydd yr Eiry, the Hill of Snow—Snow-down. In some of the Arthurian romances, such as the English version of *Libeaus Desconus*, we meet with allusions to Senaudon, or Sinadoun. Libeaus is recorded to have vanquished the magicians of that place. It seems not unlikely that Snowdon is intended, though other possibilities have been indicated—notably Sinodon Hill, in Berkshire.

The name Ricca, or Rhitta, is perplexing. It is not Welsh, and may conceivably be Erse, since Malory tells us that Ryons was King of Ireland. That, however, is not the same as stating that Ryons was himself a Gwyddel, or Irishman. Sir John Rhys evidently considers the form Rhitta or Rhita more correct than Ricca. "I wish to add," he writes, "that Elis o'r Nant makes the name of the giant buried on the top of Snowdon into Rhitta or Rhita instead of Ricca. That is also the form of the name with which Lady Rhys was familiar throughout her childhood on the Llanberis side of the mountain. She often heard of Rhita Gawr having been buried on the top of Snowdon." The name occurs twice in the story of *Kilhwch and Olwen*, and in both places the editors have printed "Gormant, the son of Ricca," but in mediæval MSS. it is difficult to decide between *t* and *c*, and Professor Rhys thinks that there is no reason to suppose that the name was ever pronounced Ricca.

But by what process was Rhitta or Rhita transformed into Ryons or Rience, as the name occurs in Malory? Here again Rhys is very helpful. "Malory's Ryons," he tells us, "is derived from the French Romances, where—as, for example, in the *Merlin*, according to the Huth MS.—it occurs as Rion-s in the nominative and Rion in *régime*. The latter, owing to the old French habit of eliding ð, or *th*, derives regularly enough from such a form as the accusative Rithon-em, which is the one occurring in Geoffrey's text; and we should probably be right in

concluding, therefore, that the correct old Welsh form of the name was Rithon."

One more cairn deserves mention—that of Tristan or Tristram, associated with Arthur in the latter romances. With great propriety it is found in the same district—Snowdon—as that of his king and master. To be precise, it is situated on the spur of the mountain known as Carnedd Lywelyn, towards the east above Ffynnon y Llyffaint.

We have now dealt with Arthur and Ryons in connection with Caernarvonshire. Yet a third of Malory's *dramatis personæ* is included in the folklore of that region, and one, as it happens, that we might least expect to find domesticated there. King Mark is so regularly associated in the romances with Cornwall that his translation to North Wales, notwithstanding various parallels to which attention has been or will be drawn, seems a wholly unjustifiable procedure. Yet it must be confessed he makes a very pretty Welshman. March (or Parch) Amheirchion (=Ab-Meirchion), lord of Castellmarch, in Lleyn—what could be more convincing? Probably ordinary readers of Malory or Tennyson make the pardonable error of supposing that the name Mark is the common baptismal name—the same, in fact, as that of the Evangelist. In a preceding paragraph, however, it was explained that Marchlyn meant Horse Lake, and here we have a clue to the true signification of the name Mark as borne by Arthur's not very reputable warrior. All traces of his Welsh fortress have vanished, but the name Castellmarch has been inherited by a staid-looking country-house which may be supposed to mark its site. "On my way to Aber Soch," writes Sir John Rhys, "I passed by an old-fashioned house which has all the appearance of having been once a place of considerable importance; and on being told that its name is Castellmarch, I began thinking of March ab Meirchion mentioned in the Triads."

Those who have confined their reading to Malory and Tennyson will recall nothing abnormal in King Mark, but Celtic tradition depicts him as having horse's ears—whence

his name. Not unnaturally, he was extremely sensitive on the subject, and desired that the fact should not become generally known. So every man who was called in to shave his beard was killed, lest he should betray the secret. In the place where the unhappy barbers were buried grew reeds, and somebody cut one to make a pipe, from which no sound could be extracted but the words "March Amheirchion has horse's ears." The matter was reported to the deformed lord of Castellmarch, who would probably have made short work of the piper, if he had not found that he himself could not produce any other sound from the pipe. He inquired where the reed had grown, and after that gave up all attempts to conceal his physical peculiarity.

The story takes different forms, one of which, given in a MS. in the Peniarth Collection, is the following: Only one person was aware that March had horse's ears, and that was his barber, who, as he did not wish to lose his head, very wisely kept the knowledge to himself. After a while, however, the barber became sick and was obliged to summon a physician, who declared that the barber was burdened with a secret, of which he would die unless he was relieved of it. He advised him to tell it to the ground. The barber did so, with beneficial effect, and on the spot where the secret was disgorged sprang up a number of tall reeds.

It so chanced that one day, as the time of a great feast was approaching, some pipers of Maelgwn Gwynedd passed by that way and observed the reeds, the best of which they cut to use for their pipes. When in due course they appeared before King March for the purpose of discoursing sweet music, they were disconcerted to find that the only notes coming from their pipes were *Klvstiav march i varch ab Meirchion* ("Horse's ears for March ab Meirchion"). Thus the proverb arose "That is gone on horns and pipes," the meaning being that a secret has become fully divulged.

Tristan, whose cairn has been mentioned above, is also

thoroughly Welsh. The Triads make him a sort of Proteus, capable of transforming himself into any shape he pleased; and in the Mabinogion he is referred to as Trystan, the son of Tallwch. He was, of course, the nephew of March ab Meirchion, for whose beautiful wife Essylt he cherished an unhappy attachment. But here we are on familiar ground, and may be content to lay stress on the localisation of the story in North Wales, supported by the evidence of names which have the appearance of being original, though, if Stephens's theory of the comparative lateness of some of the Mabinogion and many Triads be correct, the names may have been translated *back* into Welsh.

In the parish of Llandegai, near Bangor, is the pool of Cowrion. Cowrion occupies a part of the ground between the Ogwen and a stream named Afon Cegin Arthur, or "the River of Arthur's Kitchen." In the same neighbourhood is a farm called Coed Howel, and the tradition is that Howel Dda, King of Wales, had his residence there. A local antiquary, Mr. Hughes of Llandegai, brought to light other particulars regarding that monarch, who, it is said, kept boats on the Cowrion lake, and made it an annual custom to present the citizens of Bangor with three hundred fat geese which he had reared on the surface of the mere. Lastly, near Cowrion is a field called Cae Stabal, or "the Field of the Stable," containing the remains of a row of stables, and even of a number of mangers. There, it is alleged, Howel's horses once fed.

II

Anglesey

Another link may be added to the chain of coincidences connecting the loves of Tristan and Isolde with Gwynedd. Among the Mabinogion may be found the tale of *Branwen, the Daughter of Llyr*. There is little or nothing in this story to lead us to identify the insulted bride of Matholwch

with the Brangwaine, Bragwaine or Brangien of romance, but the popularity of this heroine in the poetry of the Principality assures us that Bronwen ("the White-Bosomed") has been drawn into the circle of which Tristan and Isolde are the leading figures. No more can we doubt that Matholwch is the Morholt of the *trouvères* and the Sir Marhaus of Malory.

On the banks of the River Alaw, in Anglesey, is a spot called Ynys Bronwen, or the Islet of Bronwen. In 1813 a farmer of the neighbourhood was in want of stones to make some addition to his farm-buildings, and happened to notice, not far from the river, a stone or two peeping through the turf of a circular elevation. He proceeded to investigate the mound, and, paring away the turf, came to a large heap of stones covered with earth. These he removed with some care, and his next discovery was a kistvaen formed of coarse flags canted and covered over. Having taken off the lid, he found an urn, placed with its mouth downwards, which was full of ashes and half-calcined fragments of bone. The announcement of the farmer's "find" quickly spread in all directions, and the parson of the parish and another clergyman of those parts, both interested in archæology, were instantly reminded of a passage in the Mabinogi of *Branwen, the Daughter of Llyr*, viz.:

Bedd petrual a wnaed i Fronwen ferch Lyr ar lan Alaw, ac yno y claddwyd hi.

A square grave was made for Bronwen, the daughter of Lyr, on the banks of the Alaw, and there she was buried.

The situation and construction of the grave exactly conformed to the description in the text of the old Welsh romance, and led to the inference that it was actually the *bedd petrual* in which the broken-hearted lady was laid to rest. If we do not quite share this belief, it is on account of an uneasy suspicion that the heroine was largely a creature of fancy.

This cromlech is not the only object of Arthurian interest in Anglesey. In the southern side of Mynydd y Cnwc, in the

parish of Llangwyfan on the south-west coast, is Ogof Arthur, or Arthur's Cave. This is one of several reputed treasure-caves in different parts of Britain. The sea which washes the foot of Mynydd y Cnwc closes the mouth of the cave at high tide, but there is said to be a vent-hole in the side of the mountain. The cave is spacious, and, according to report, is a mile in length.

Local tradition asserts that here for a time Arthur found shelter in his war with the Gwyddelodd, or Irish, and that the cave contains various treasures. In this respect it has a competitor in a cromlech on the summit of Mynydd y Cnwc. Around this is a circle of stones, within which there is believed to be buried an iron chest full of ancient gold. Time after time people in the neighbourhood, eager to enrich themselves, have endeavoured to dig it up, but ominous signs and tokens have, on each occasion, compelled them to desist.

These stories closely resemble the legends already recorded as occurring in Caernarvonshire, and it may be stated that we shall meet with an instance equally striking in the Eildon Hills, near Melrose Abbey. Meanwhile a more dubious example may be noticed. About a mile to the north of the village of Llandybïc, in Caermarthenshire, and on a farm called Cil yr Ychen, is a limestone hill which bears the name of Y Dinas, or The Fortress. On the level summit of this fastness is the entrance of a long cavern called Ogo'r Dinas ("the Dinas Cave"). The opening is low and narrow, but by degrees the cave widens, and in one part is spacious and lofty and gives access to a number of smaller caves that branch out of it. Mr. Fisher, a native of the district, informed Sir John Rhys that he had heard of two traditions respecting Ogo'r Dinas. One was that King Arthur and his warriors lie sleeping in it, with their right hands clasping the hilts of their drawn swords, ready to encounter anyone who may dare to disturb their repose; while there was another legend that one Owen Lawgoch lived in it some time or other.

Returning to Anglesey—above Redwharf Bay are the

remains of an ancient camp which are known as the Burdd Arthur, or Arthur's Table; and in the wooded grounds of Llwyliarth is a rocking stone, the Maen Chwf, which is sometimes described as Arthur's Quoit.

III

Denbighshire

Memorials of Arthur are to be found not only to the west, but also to the east of Snowdon. Old Leland draws attention to one of them. Near Denbigh, he tells us in his *Itinerary*, "there is in the Paroch of Llansannen in the side of a Stony Hille, a Place wher there be twenty-four Holes or Places in a Roundel for men to sitte in, but some lesse, and some bigger, cutte out of the mayne Rock by Mannes Hand; and there Children and Young Men cumming to seke their Catelle used to sitte and play. Sum caulle it the Rounde Table. Kiddes use there communely to play and skip from Sete to Sete." Moreover, between Mold and Denbigh is Moel Arthur, a British fort defended by two very deep trenches; and between Mold and Ruthin is Maen Arthur, a stone fancifully declared to bear the impress of the hoof of the monarch's charger.

Folklore associates Arthur with the counties of Denbigh and Flint, where he had as a rival in certain love-affairs one of the many sons of Caw, and a brother of St. Gildas, named Huail. It seems that Huail laid siege to a lady who stood high in the king's favour. Having reason to suspect that he was being supplanted, the jealous monarch secretly armed himself and set himself to watch his rival's movements. After a while he observed him entering the lady's house—a discovery which led to high words between the warriors. Finally they fought. Huail gained the upper hand and wounded Arthur in the thigh, whereupon the duel ended and the parties were reconciled, on the under-

standing that Huail should never taunt Arthur with the result of the combat on pain of losing his head. The king then withdrew to his palace, which was situated at Caerwys, in Flintshire, to be healed of his wound. He made a perfect recovery, except that the injury caused him ever after to limp a little.

Not long after he regained the use of his limbs, Arthur conceived a lively affection for a lady at Rhuthyn (or Ruthin), in Denbighshire; and, wishing to enjoy her company more freely, disguised himself as one of her sex. One day, when he was dancing with the lady and her friends, who should call but Huail. The latter had no difficulty in recognising the king, owing to Arthur's lameness, and he remarked, "This dancing might do very well but for the thigh." As it fell out, Arthur overheard this saying, and, quitting the dance, he summoned Huail before him. He then upbraided the knight for the violation of his solemn oath and promise, and commanded that he should be beheaded on a stone which lay in the street of the town, and, in consequence of that circumstance, obtained the name of Maen Huail.

This stone, it is said, is still in the town of Rhuthyn.

Near Mold, in Flintshire, was formerly a cairn—it was removed in 1832—which was declared by the people of the countryside to be haunted by a spectre in golden armour. After 300 cartloads of stones had been taken away, the men employed on the work discovered a skeleton lying at full length. It was that of a tall and powerful man, clad in a finely wrought corslet of gold lined with bronze. The gold was a covering of thin plate, and the corslet, on being measured, was found to be three feet seven inches in length. Close by were 300 amber beads, and the remains of some iron-work, as well as an urn laden with ashes, about three yards from the skeleton. The chief interest lay, of course, in the corslet, which was believed to be foreign and of the kind designated by Professor Boyd-Dawkins as Etruscan. It seems probable that the interment occurred in the time

of the Roman occupation, before the practice of cremation became entirely obsolete.

There is no suggestion that this grave was that of Arthur, or of any of his knights, but the description of its contents will perhaps assist our imagination when we endeavour to form a picture of the champions of British freedom against the inroads of the heathen hordes. Owing to the influence of the romances we are forced, almost against our will, to think of them in the trappings of a much later age. This is a little bit of realism.

It may be added that Williams, in his *Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Welshmen*, identifies the skeleton, said to be that of a man of gigantic stature, with the remains of Benlli Gawr, or the Giant, lord of a wide domain forming parts of the present counties of Flint and Denbigh, who lived about the middle of the fifth century. The lorica, or corslet, is stated to be preserved in the British Museum.

LANCASHIRE

LANCASHIRE cannot be said to be entirely outside the scope of Arthurian study, but the county is certainly not rich in interesting materials. Arthur's second, third, fourth and fifth battles are said to have been fought on a river "by the Britons called Duglas," which has been identified with the River Douglas in Lancashire. Camden took that view—"Duglesse, a riveret which creepeth and stealeth along quietly by this place [Wigan] neere unto which our noble Arthur, as Nennius writeth, put the Saxons to flight in a most memorable battaile." Whitaker, a Lancashire historian, naturally supports the claim of the local river, but Dr. Guest, though he mentions that writer's dictum, appears to prefer another selection—the little River Dunglas, which formed the southern boundary of Lothian. Similarly, in the case of the tenth battle, which took place on the banks of the River Trat Treuroit, Guest comments, "Or Ribroit, the Brue in Somersetshire; or the Ribble in Lancashire." Here he evidently considers the claims more evenly balanced, although it is significant that he gives first place to the Somerset stream. It is worthy of note that the Douglas flows into the estuary of the Ribble at Hesketh Bank, and thus all five battles may have been fought nearly on the same spot. In his poetical paraphrase of Nennius in *Lancelot and Elaine*, Tennyson speaks of "the shore of Duglas" and "the waste sand-shores of Trath Treroit." Such phrases seem applicable only to the mouths of rivers, and it is very likely that the poet accepted Camden's statement with regard to the Duglas, and, with it, Dr. Guest's alternative explanation of the uncouth but suggestive name Trat Treuroit.

This is all that we should have to say about Lancashire in an Arthurian sense but for the publication of a remark-

able brochure by the late Mr. A. Bilderbeck, M.A., Balliol College, Oxford. At the close of his little work, *Lancashire and King Arthur*, the author refers to himself as "one who has been highly complimented on his knowledge of logic by such competent judges as Professor Fowler and Professor Bain, and on his knowledge of history and literature by such eminent scholars as Sir (*sic*) Edward Freeman, Sir George Young, Professor J. G. Fitch, Professor Hales, etc." Hence "he thinks he may humbly say that he has not approached the subject as an altogether incompetent ignoramus—at least, he hopes not." Mr. Bilderbeck might not have invoked those eminent names or admitted the possibility of his being deemed an ignoramus but for his advocacy of wildly revolutionary doctrines. Unfortunately, it is not only his doctrines that are revolutionary, but his style also. An extreme instance of his lack of literary decorum is his exhortation to the critical reader—"Yes, it's all right, sonny, keep your hair on; there is a 'Somerset' not so very far from Hoghton Tower."

A writer who can descend to such a lamentable disregard of the King's English may seem hardly worthy of serious attention, but it must be allowed that Mr. Bilderbeck displays a surprising amount of ingenuity in his attempt to overthrow preconceived ideas of Arthurian topography. The ingenuity is, in our judgment, entirely misapplied, but as an acrobatic performance his essay deserves some admiration. If we could accept his arguments, we should be obliged to regard Arthur as a Lancashire hero, and we shall hardly need to travel beyond the confines of the duchy to find all the places named by all the writers who have discoursed concerning King Arthur and his court, whether in poetry or in prose. Mr. Bilderbeck's special pleading is equal to any test. Practically, he has to build up his case on foundations which he has himself laid, and his method is to force upon local names an Arthurian meaning, which is then produced as evidence of his arbitrary hypothesis. His position, therefore, is quite different from that of Mr. Skene and Mr. Stuart Glennie, whose

procedure is somewhat similar. Philological investigation is reasonable enough where literary remains and local legends combine to point the way, but Mr. Bilderbeck runs counter to the plain statements of ancient writers, the conclusions of the most esteemed modern scholars—and, as for local legends, the infecundity of Lancashire in genuine Arthurian lore is very marked. Mr. Bilderbeck is fully aware of the value of popular traditions, and declares that the folklore of the Lancashire peasantry "teems with legends of King Arthur." Why, then, has he not reported them—a course which, on his own showing, would have helped his cause better than anything else?

It is impossible, as well as unnecessary, to examine Mr. Bilderbeck's contentions one by one, but as a specimen of his perverse reasoning we may quote the following passage:

"Centuries ago, the townships of Hoghton, Wheelton and Withnell, in the 'hundred' of the well-known district of Leyland, composed what was known in those days as the 'lordship of Gunolvesmores or Gunovolsmores,' which, being interpreted literally, may be taken *without a doubt* to mean 'Guinevere's Marsh.' Not far from this 'Guinevere's Marsh' is the district of Bleasdale, which is really Bleys Dale, and Bleys, as you all know, was Merlin's master. Now the great magician Merlin's name was originally spelt Myrrdin or Myrdhin, with a decided tendency on the part of the *d* to be pronounced like a *t*, and hence we get Mertin or Martin; and Martin Mere, or, as it was sometimes called, Mertin Mere, was *doubtless* named after the great magician. We do not think—and we don't suppose any of our readers will think—that it was 'a mere chance coincidence' which gave the names of *Bleys* Dale, Martin Mere and '*Guinevere's Marsh*' to places in the immediate vicinity of each other; places in the very locality, where, *as we have every reason to believe*, King Arthur and the Knights of his Table Round lived and moved and had their being. . . . And to clinch the matter, we may tell our readers that the very name of the Round Table has been preserved in this district as, we

believe, no other district in England has preserved it. The Round Table was in reality a 'revolving table,' or chair, or seat. Now the old Welsh or Celtic word for a table, chair or seat of this revolving sort was *sidyll*, which, we believe, actually survives in the Welsh language of the present day. There is a 'Sidyll's Farm,' or, as it is now spelt, 'Siddel's Farm,' near Chisnal Wood and Coppall Moor, between Eccleston and Standish." [1]

Although Mr. Bilderbeck "happens to be widely and deeply read in history and archæology," his *Lancashire and King Arthur*, of which the above is a fair sample, cannot be accepted as a serious contribution to Arthurian learning. It is, in fact, a remarkable instance of learning run mad, an unintentional caricature, which might have been dismissed with a passing notice but for a certain plausibility which may well ensnare the callow student, while the author's academic testamur and the benedictions which he states to have been bestowed upon him by scholars of the highest distinction impart a false value to a bizarre and almost ludicrous dissertation. The following account *is* ludicrous:

"'Elaine the fair, Elaine the loveable, Elaine the lily maid of Astolat,' is, as all our readers are aware, the same as 'the lady of Shalott.' Now it so happens that we can prove Shalott to have been in the vicinity of Gunolvesmores. 'Shalott' is a species of onion which came originally from Ascalon, the well-known stronghold of the Philistines mentioned in the Bible. The *allium ascalonium*, as it was originally called, was brought into France and Italy and the British Isles by Phœnician traders or sea-rovers. . . . The name *allium ascalonium* still survives in Italian as *scalogna*, but in French it has got corrupted into *eschalotte* and then *echalotte*; and in the still further abbreviated forms *chalotte* and *schalotte* we can recognise our modern *shalott*. Under these circumstances it is curious, to say the least of it, that Elaine is called both 'the lady

[1] Siddall and Siddalls are common English surnames; neither having the remotest connection with the Round Table.

of Shalott' and 'the lily maid of Astolat,' since there actually was an Astolat, centuries ago, in this part of Lancashire of which we are speaking, and there is, moreover, further proof that, in the earlier centuries still, it was called 'Ascalon'! In the Lancashire Church Surveys of A.D. 1650 the word Astlan, or Astolan, is used to designate the district comprising Holmes, Sollom and Hesketh, which adjoin the 'lordship of Gunolvesmores.' And in another document, a legal document dated A.D. 1223, one Robert Viliers and his heirs are 'empowered hereby to break up a portion of the pasture-land lying between the waters of Ascalon and La Onisse [Lyonnesse; *see* Article I.] for the purpose of improving the Manor of Holes,' or Much Hoole, on the east bank of the River Douglas. Here we have the name of Ascalon in all its naked simplicity, and here, too, we find that the 'shalott,' or ALLIUM ASCALONIUM, is very much cultivated as marketable produce even to the present day."

All this is desperately silly, and there is much more in *Lancashire and King Arthur* that is equally calculated to arouse laughter. Indeed, the only passage in the thirty-two closely printed pages on which one is inclined to fix respectful attention is a reference to one of Malory's minor characters, though even this is disappointingly vague. Mr. Bilderbeck brings Sir Lancelot to Manchester, and cites from the *Mancuniensis* of "one Hollinworth," who lived in the seventeenth century, a local version of the terrible fight between Sir Lancelot and Sir Turquine (or Tarquine).

"It is said that Sir Tarquine, a stout enemy of King Arthur, kept this castle (the Roman castle in Castle-field), and neere to the foard in Medlock, about Mabhouse, hung a bason on a tree, on which bason whosoever did strike, Sir Tarquine, or some of his company, would come and fight with him, and it is said that Sir Lancelot did beat upon the bason, fought with Tarquine, killed him, and possessed himselfe of the castle and loosed the prisoners."

A few more traditions of this sort would have been

worth more than whole chapters of spurious etymology and crazy distortion of the Arthurian legend. "One swallow does not make a summer," and it is possible that Hollinworth had no better grounds for this claim than Mr. Bilderbeck has for most of his. On the other hand, we may conclude from the expression "it is said" that he did not originate it, and the fact that the claim was made more than two centuries ago, and has probably never been challenged, gives Manchester a kind of prescriptive right to Sir Tarquin, of which nobody will be anxious to deprive her. At the same time, the account in the *Morte Darthur*, on which all later versions of the story appear to be founded, makes no mention of Manchester or Lancashire. This is also true of the ancient and sprightly ballad *Sir Lancelot du Lake*, which is entirely concerned with the fight between Lancelot and Tarquin, and is a versified paraphrase of Malory. The ballad is quoted in the Second Part of *Henry IV.*, Act II. Sc. iv.:

> *Falstaff. When Arthur first in court*—Empty the jordan—*And was a worthy king.*

It is probable, therefore, that the song was known far and wide, with the result that Sir Tarquin was a much more important personage than he seems to us, Tennyson having failed to popularise him. The desire to localise Sir Tarquin at Manchester is thus explained. Lancelot, doughtiest opponent,

> Who has in prison threescore knights
> And four, that he did wound,

naturally conferred distinction on the city.

Æthelfrith's victory at Chester (607) and the subsequent reduction of Lancashire to the status of a Saxon province probably account for the dearth of genuine Arthurian interest in the county palatine. From that time it formed a wedge between the purely Celtic regions of Wales and Cumbria, and lost touch with the traditions which they succeeded in perpetuating. South Wales was not conquered

till 1090; and North Wales not until 1282. Cumbria, from the Derwent to the Clyde, was subdued in 946 by King Edmund, who bestowed it as a fief on Malcolm of Scotland. Part of it was resumed by William the Red, and formed into the present county of Cumberland, while the northern portion—that of the "Strathclyde Welshmen"—became more firmly attached to the Scottish crown.

CUMBERLAND

I

Carlisle

In ancient times Cumberland was a characteristically *British* district. By British is meant Brythonic in opposition to Goidelic or Anglian. The fact must not be forgotten that not only were large portions of what is now England occupied by Goidels—the hated Gwyddelodd, or Irish, of the Welsh bards—but an important strip of the east coast immediately adjacent to Strathclyde formed the Anglian kingdom of Bernicia, to the south of which was the rival Anglian settlement of Deira. These were eventually united into the single kingdom of Northumbria under King Æthelfrith, whose dominion stretched from the Firth of Forth to the mouth of the Humber. Till the tenth century, however, Strathclyde and Cumbria, as far south, perhaps, as Morecambe Bay, remained intact as an unconquered portion of Celtdom, though severed from the sister land of Wales.

Cumbria and Cambria are really different forms of the same name, denoting the country of the Cymry. The latter was first regularly applied to Wales by Geoffrey of Monmouth and Giraldus Cambrensis, and both go back to an ancient Celtic term represented by the modern Welsh *Cymru,* which is limited to the Principality. In Wales, states Professor Rhys, this is "pronounced nearly as an Englishman would treat it if spelled *Kumry.*" Borrow does spell it, phonetically, Cumry. In the Saxon Chronicle Cumbria figures as Cumberland, or Cumbraland—that is, the land of the Cumbras or Cymry. Cumbria was not co-extensive with the present county of Cumber-

land—it was certainly very much larger—nor again does it appear to have been a single domain. It was rather split up into a number of small districts, each subject to its own chief. Among the rest was Rheged, the ruler of which was the famous Urien, represented as the husband of Morgan le Fay and brother-in-law of King Arthur. Urien, whose *floruit* is somewhat late to be consistent with this story, had an actual existence. He, Rhydderch and others carried on a stubborn war against Hussa, King of Bernicia, between 567 and 574; and again, between 580 and 587, Urien and his sons bravely, and with many vicissitudes, contended in arms with Theodric, another King of Bernicia. One of Urien's sons was Owain, of whom we learn much from the Mabinogion of *The Dream of Rhonabwy* and *The Lady of the Fountain*. As Yvain, he is the hero of a romance by Chrétien, while Malory calls him Sir Ewaine le Blanchemains (Sir Owen the White-handed), and speaks of King Uriens as his father, but not of Morgan le Fay as his mother, who, according to a Triad, was Modron, the sister of Afallach!

Malory regularly styles "Uriens" the King of Gore—a practice that is quite in accordance with Welsh tradition, which assigns to Urien of Rheged, sometimes in concert with Cunedda and sometimes alone, the credit of expelling the Goidels from the districts of Gower and Kidwelly, in South Wales. It has been supposed that after the great battle of Arderydd, which took place in 573, Urien marched south and liberated the Brythonic lands from the usurpers.

The inhabitants of Bernicia were called Bearnicas by the Anglo-Saxons, who derived the term from the Welsh Breënnych or Brenneich. It is of the same origin as Brigantes, the name of a Celtic people mentioned by Cæsar. It was therefore properly applicable to the British folk who owned the region before they were dispossessed by the Angles. The earliest of the native rulers was Cunedda—so oddly associated with Urien Rheged in the Welsh tradition before mentioned—who is said in the appendix to Nennius to have been the great-great-grandfather of

Maelgwn Gwynedd. Cunedda's court was at Carlisle, and thence his power extended to Caer Weir, which is supposed to have been Wearmouth, on the east coast. He wore the gold belt, the badge of office of the *Dux Britanniarum*, in which he was succeeded after a long interval by the magnanimous Arthur.

Arthur's court was eminently movable. We have found it at Gelliwic, at Camelot, at Caerlleon, and in an Old French poem it is stated:

Q' le rois cort a cestre tint.

Malory also tells us that he "commanded that the high feast of Pentecost should be holden at a city and a castle the which in those days was called Kink-Kenadon, upon the sands that marched nigh Wales." If Arthur could hold his court at a place now so obscure, at Kink-Kenadon (which may just conceivably be Kenchester, on the Roman road between Caerlleon and Wroxeter[1]), surely we may expect that he would not overlook the claims of that ancient capital of his race, Carlisle.

Much uncertainty exists with respect to "Carduel," so often mentioned in Old French poetry. Lytton, in a note to his epic *King Arthur*, writes: "The Carduel of the Fabliaux is not easily ascertained; its site, though without close adherence to the actual features of the locality, is here identified with Caerleon-upon-Usk, the favourite residence of King Arthur, according to the Welsh poets." Sir Edward Strachey does not regard Carduel and Caerleon as identical, but, in his Introduction to the Globe edition of the *Morte Darthur*, he suggests that his author sometimes confounds Caerleon and Carlisle. He writes:

"The story opens within a night's ride of the castle of Tintagil. Thence we pass to St. Albans, to London, and to Carlion. This last is, no doubt, Caerleon-upon-Usk, but it seems through this, as in other romances, to be

[1] Kink-Kenadon is said to be on the marches of Wales, but also by the sea-side. It is hard to satisfy such conditions. Kenchester is in Herefordshire.

interchangeable in the author's mind with Carlisle, or (as written in Anglo-Norman form) Cardoile, which latter, in the *History of Merlin*, is said to be in Wales, while elsewhere Wales and Cumberland are confounded in like manner."

At the commencement of Chrétien's romance *Le Chevalier au Lion*, it is distinctly stated: "The court was at Carduel in Wales." Yet Mr. Stuart Glennie does not hesitate to observe that Carlisle "would appear to be the Caer Lliwelydd of the *Book of Taliesin* and the Cardueil of Romance, even still more famous than the hardly yet identified Camelot, and the favourite residence of King Arthur." How are we to explain this confusion? The answer is very simple. Assuming that the romancers drew from Latin sources, they might naturally mistake Cumbria for Cambria. If, on the other hand, they were indebted to orally reported folk-tales in Brittany, there might have been no difference whatever in the names.

The first syllable of the name Carlisle is obviously the familiar British word *caer*, a fort, while the second is a corruption of another British word only preserved in the Latinised form Lugubalia. The present spelling is seemingly due to Norman influence, the *s* having no business in the name at all. We may suppose that in process of time the name, having been corrupted to Caerluel, continental writers changed the form to Carduel, or Cardueil, as more easy of pronunciation. The retention of the final *l* points to Carlisle rather than Caerlleon as the place indicated.

Be all this as it may, the later English romancers and ballad-makers speak of Arthur's court at Carlisle. It will be recollected that in the *Morte Darthur* the story is told how that the mother of Sir Alphegus, a great sorceress, brought the desperately wounded Sir Urre of the Mount and his sister Felelolie, "a full fair damsel," to England that the luckless warrior might be healed by the best knight in the world—"and by fortune she came nigh the feast of Pentecost until Arthur's court, that at that time was holden at Carlisle."

The ballad of *The Boy and the Mantle* commences:

In the third day of May,
To Carleile did come
A kind curteous child
That cold (*knew*) much of wisdome.

Another ballad, *The Marriage of Sir Gawaine,* opens with an allusion to Carlisle as the residence of King Arthur:

King Arthur lives in merry Carleile,
And seemly is to see;
And there with him Queene Guenever,
That bride so bright of blee.

Percy tells us that at one time he suspected that the Carleile so often mentioned in the ballads of King Arthur was a corruption of Caerlleon, but he became convinced that Carlisle, in Cumberland, was intended. "The Old English minstrels," he says, "being most of them Northern men, naturally represented the hero of romance as residing in the North." He adds—what we shall find to be the fact—that many of the places mentioned in the old ballads are still to be found there. It may be said with truth that Cumberland is a well-established region of King Arthur's Country with an exceptionally noble capital. It is no wonder that the minstrels, gazing from the wide plain that stretches from the Border hills to Solway Firth, and beholding the height crowned with castle and cathedral, were fascinated and deemed it a meet abode for the King of Faërie whilst he yet sojourned among men. Round it sweep the three streams, the Eden, the Peteril and the Caldew; and concerning the first-named there is a legend that Arthur's father attempted, but in vain, to turn it out of its course:

Let Uther Pendragon do what he can,
Eden shall run where Eden ran.

An accomplished novelist of the last generation, Mr. Mortimer Collins, refers to this tradition in his book *Who is the Heir?*

The reader will remember Vortigern as a builder of cities. We have recorded his futile enterprise on the top of Snowdon, and, before that, his foundation of "Cair

Guorthegirn" of doubtful site. Commenting on the passage of Nennius narrating the latter circumstance, an ancient scholiast adds: "He then built Guasmoric, near Lugubalia [Carlisle], a city which in English is called Palmecaster."

II

The Tarn Wadling

To the south of Carlisle lies Inglewood Forest (which, according to one conjecture, is the "Wood Celidon," the scene of Arthur's seventh battle). Within this sylvan region, which extended from Carlisle to Penrith, was the Tarn Wahethelyne, or, as it is called in later times, the Tarn Wadling. The story attaching to this lake—which is very prettily told in the Percy ballad *The Marriage of Sir Gawaine* before quoted—is the subject of more than one romance, and the *dénouement* bears some resemblance to the conclusion of *Sir Lybeaus*, in which a horrible-looking enchanted damsel is restored to her youth and beauty and weds her deliverer.

The Tarn Wadling must have been conceived of as a lake of considerable extent, since out of its bosom rose a lofty hill on which stood the battlemented castle of the Grim Baron, "whose strokes were nothing sweet." Arthur could not contend with this churlish knight, because the latter cast a spell on him, and bound him, if he did not wish to lose his land, to return within a year and a day with the answer "what thing it is that women most desire." The secret is at length revealed to him by a Foul Ladye, who says that what her sex like best is their own will. As a reward for this service, the loathsome hag requires that Arthur shall find her a young, fair and courtly knight for a husband. Of all Arthur's followers Gawaine alone is willing to accomplish the marriage, and on the wedding-night the bride is transformed into a lovely maiden, so lovely indeed that:

The Queen said, and her ladyes all,
She is the fairest now in this hall.

She turns out to be the sister of the Grim Baron, who has been similarly enchanted, and is also released from the spell the false ladye, his step-mother, had inflicted on him. The romancer assures us that

This ferly (*miracle*) befel full soothly to feign
In Inglewood Forest at the Tarn Wathelayne.

The tarn no longer exists, but Mr. Stuart Glennie succeeded in finding its site near the village of Upper Hesket. He was guided to the spot—a wide meadow grazed by hundreds of sheep—by an intelligent old man, who remembered when the place was drained and told Mr. Glennie "what fun it was to see the swine that belonged to a cottager at the far end of the tarn get tired of the dead carp that were cast on the land and wade in to fish for the 'quick uns.'" The old man, who had lived in the neighbourhood for half a century, appears to have been quite ignorant of the adventures which have made the tarn famous, and the only lay about King Arthur with which he was acquainted was by no means flattering to that hero:

When as King Arthur ruled this land
He ruled it like a swine;
He bought three pecks of barleymeal
To make a pudding fine.

His pudding it was knodden well,
And stuffed right full of plums;
And lumps of suet he put in
As big as my two thumbs.

The site of Castle Hewin, the stronghold of the Grim Baron, is supposed to be the eminence to the east of the meadow which was once the Tarn Wadling. Behind this hill the Eden flows past a locality known as Baron Wood, which may or may not be reminiscent of that terrible personage.

Mr. Glennie thinks that the legend of the marriage of Gawayne belongs to the class of Sun-myths; and he

compares with it the ballad of the *Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heugh, near Bamborough Castle,* composed by Duncan Frazier, the Bard of Cheviot, in 1270. The Laidley Worm (i.e. the Loathsome Dragon) undergoes a transformation similar to that of the Foul Ladye, for her brother, coming in a ship with rowan-tree masts over the Eastern Sea:

> . . . sheathed his sword, and bent his bow
> And gave her kisses three;
> She crept into a hole a worm,
> And stept out a Ladye.

In reality this legend is much more like the romance of Sir Lybeaus to which we have previously referred. There the knight, after slaying the sorceress, returns to the palace to deliver the lady, but cannot find her. As he is lamenting a window opens, through which enters a horrible serpent with wings and a woman's face. It coils round his neck and kisses him, and then is suddenly transformed into a very beauteous lady. She tells him that she is the Lady of Sinadon, and was thus enchanted till she might kiss Sir Gawaine, or someone of his blood. He has dissolved the charm, and now he may have as his reward her person and her dominions.

III

The Grene Chapel

On the way to Penrith, the Arthurian pilgrim passes Plumpton Park and Hatton, both of which places are named in the romances of Sir Gawaine. It may be said that Cumberland is especially the country of that knight, of whom more presently.

About half a mile from Penrith is a set of circular embankments round a central mound with a flat surface which goes by the name of Arthur's Round Table. The entrenchment is eighty-seven feet in diameter. Scott, in his *Bride of Triermain,* alludes to "Penrith's Table Round,"

and in a note on this description Lockhart informs us that the circle within the ditch is about 160 paces in circumference, with openings, or approaches, directly opposite each other. He then proceeds: "As the ditch is on the inner side it could not be intended for the purpose of defence, and it has been reasonably conjectured that the enclosure was designed for the solemn exercise of feats of chivalry, and the embankment around for the convenience of spectators."

In the demesne of Brougham Castle, which is in the neighbourhood, is a cave with which is connected a tradition of a giant slain by Sir Lancelot du Lac, whom Malory credits with demolishing a brace of such monsters (see above, p. 20). It would seem not unlikely that we have here a confused memory of another legend—that of Sir Gawaine and the Grene Knight. The Scottish poem, by "Huchowne of the Awle Ryale," relates how Arthur and Guinevere were keeping Christmas and New Year at Camelot, when a bearded giant-knight, with a huge sharp axe in one hand and a bough of holly in the other, rode into the hall. He was clad in green, bright as enamel upon gold, and bestrode a green foal. Forthwith he challenged any of Arthur's knights to deal him a blow, on condition that the blow was returned after a year and a day. Arthur received the axe, and, at Gawaine's entreaty, passed it to him. Gawaine thereupon struck off the Grene Knight's head. The mutilated trunk lifted the head from the ground, remounted the green foal, and held the head towards Gawaine, whom it warned to seek the knight in the Grene Chapel.

Months went by, and then Gawaine set forth on his dolorous errand. He was almost in despair of finding either the Grene Knight or the Grene Chapel, when, on Christmas Day, he espied a high castle on a hill, where he met with a hospitable welcome, and, having told the lord of the castle the object of his journey, the latter promised to conduct him to the Grene Chapel by the set time. Meanwhile, on three occasions when her husband was hunting, the lady

of the house affected to make love to Gawaine, who finally accepted from her a green girdle, which was said to have the virtue of protecting the wearer from wounds and death.

On New Year's Day, which was bleak and stormy, Gawaine set out with his guide over the rocks to the Grene Chapel, which was stated to be at the bottom of a woody dale. However, Gawaine perceived no chapel there —only a hole in the hill on the farther side of the stream, whence there came a terrible sound as of someone grinding an axe. Suddenly, out of the hole leapt the Grene Knight, who commended Gawaine for being true to his word, and made ready to deal the expected blow. At first Gawaine, though he had not forgotten to don the magic girdle, shrank a little from the ordeal, but, stung by the Grene Knight's taunts, he stood stiff as a rock, and the axe fell, but was swung with such deftness as merely to cut the skin. That Gawaine received even this slight hurt was caused by his acceptance of the green girdle, but the knight considerately allowed that it was natural for Gawaine to value his life. He also explained that all that had happened at the castle was by arrangement between his wife and himself, gave Gawaine the gold-hemmed girdle, and bade him return to the castle and keep the New Year.

In answer to Gawaine's questioning, the Grene Knight said that his right name was Bernlak de Beaudesert, and that he owed his power to Morgan le Fay, who abode in the house, and had learnt much of Merlin. The whole affair, in fact, had been planned by that whimsical lady to test the courage of the knights and scare Guinevere to death with the sight of the grinning head.

Sir Frederick Madden, editor of the *Romances of Syr Gawayne*, conjectured the Grene Chapel of this story was identical with a "Chapel of the Grene" which old maps of Cumberland show to have been situated on a tongue of land which runs into the estuary of the Wampool, not far from Skinburness. Mr. Glennie, after a visit to the

spot, was inclined to approve of this suggestion. Wandering up the Solway beach to the extreme point of Skinburness, he came upon a "beautifully embayed shore, covered with the brightest green down to the very water's edge, from which, if indeed the Chapel of the Grene, it might well have taken its name." He thinks it probable, also, that the abode of the Grene Knight, stated to have been two miles from the Grene Chapel, was none other than Volstey or Vulstey Castle, connected for so long a period with the name of the famous wizard Michael Scot.

Here brief reference may be made to another castle—that of the King of Man—of which mention occurs in one of the romances of Sir Gawaine:

> He let him see a castle fair,
> Such a one he never saw yare,
> Nowhere in no country.
> The Turkë said to Sir Gawaine
> Yonder dwells the King of Man,
> A heathen soldan is he.

Nennius calls the Isle of Man Eubonia, or Manau, and the former of the two names bears some resemblance to the Ermonie of the *Romance of Sir Tristrem*. The island is the Mynaw of Taliesin. Originally fairies dwelt there, but they were overcome by a race of giants, who lorded it over the island till the mighty Merlin appeared and by his spells imprisoned them in underground dungeons.

IV

Liddesdale

Politically Liddesdale is in Scotland, but it is close to the Border, and it will be convenient to deal with its Arthurian associations here. On the eastern side of the valley is a hill called Arthur's Seat, but more importance attaches to the probability that the great battle of Arderydd was fought in this neighbourhood. This decisive engage-

ment is repeatedly mentioned in the Triads, the *Life of Merlin*, and in *Four Ancient Books of Wales*. Mr. Skene, the editor of the last-named publication, writes:

"Concealed under these extravagant fables we can see the outlines of one of those great historical struggles which alter the fate of a country. . . . It was, in short, a great struggle between the supporters of the advancing Christianity and the departing Paganism, in which the former were victorious. That it was an historical event, and that this was its character, appears from this, that it occurs in the *Annales Cambriæ* as a real event about the year 573: 'bellum Armterid inter filios Elifer et Gwendoleu filium Keidiau, in quo bello Gwendolen cecidit. Merlinus insanus effectus'; and that 573 is the first year of the reign of Rhydderch over Strathclyde, and of Aidan over Dalriada."

Rhydderch Hael, one of the victorious leaders and king of the Strathclyde Cymry, is said to have been converted to Christianity by St. Columba, and to have fought the battle of Arderydd against Gwendolleu ab Keidiaw. The date of the battle is sometimes given as A.D. 577, and Merlin, who espoused the losing cause, was compelled, according to tradition, to conceal himself in the forests, where he had as his familiar a little pig.

A glimpse of the mad Merlin is afforded us in the Life of St. Kentigern. One day the saint was praying in the wild solitude of the Caledonian Forest when there sprang across his path a madman, naked and hairy and destitute of all earthly comforts, like some wild, frenzied being. The saint asked him who, or what, he was, and the portent replied: "Once the prophet of Vortigern, called Merlin, enduring hardships in this solitude. For I was the cause of the massacre of all the slain in a war sufficiently known to all in this country, which was in a field lying between Lidel and Carvanolow."

Carwhinelow is the name of a burn flowing from Nicholl Forest into the Esk, and on its banks is a village of the same description. Just above the junction of the Esk and

the Liddel, and on the top of a high bank overhanging the river, is the "Moat of Liddel," commonly known as the "Roman Camp," but "obviously," says Mr. Skene, "a native strength." Hence the ground slopes down on the eastern side to a place called Ridding, which may answer to "Erydon"—the name given to the battle by Merlin. Between the fort and the village of Carwhinelow is a field which appears to have been the scene of the engagement. It skirts the Carwhinelow stream and extends right up to the ridge on which the fort is situated. "I have no doubt," says Mr. Skene, "that the name Carwhinelow is a corruption of Caerwenddolew, the caer or city of Gwenddolew" —the Pagan leader defeated and slain in the battle.

To the south rise the Knolls of Arthuret, which, in all likelihood, is a modern form of Arderydd, the name by which the battle is commonly known.[1] Hutchinson, the historian of Cumberland, absurdly supposes that Arthuret is a corruption of "Arthur's *Head*," but the name has nothing to do with Arthur. That hero had apparently no share in the battle, which took place indeed long after the assumed date of his death,[2] and would not have concerned us but for the curious legend connecting it with Merlin. How Merlin could have been at one time the prophet of Vortigern and at another the cause of the Battle of Arderydd is a problem soluble only by the doctrine of metempsychosis.

Nearly every writer on Arthurian topography betrays a weakness—an amiable weakness—for discovering a rich setting for the last act in the life of the great king—the casting away of Excalibur. Mr. Glennie finds the site of the battle of Camlan at Camelon, on the Firth of Forth, but in the face of consistency he transports the wounded hero to Solway Firth, in deference to the traditional belief that Avalon lay in the direction of the Setting Sun. And so he writes with poetical and artistic fervour:

[1] Airdrie, near Glasgow, has also been suggested as a possible site of the battle.

[2] A.D. 537 or 541.

"The scene I beheld as I went down to the tide 'washing among the reeds' struck me as of a weird and magical beauty. Behind, in the middle of the great plain, was still clearly visible the mound of Arthuret; before me in the far distance, to the right, was the Scottish Criffel, and, to the left, the English Skiddaw; between these, in the sheen of the setting sun, and stretching away amid points of land to the west, so that, whether it was land-locked as a lake or boundless as a sea, one could not tell, was Solway. 'Here,' I thought, 'well may one feign that here, even at such a sunset hour as this, after the last fatal battle on the plain above, Excalibur was thrown into the sea; that here it was caught by the fairy hand, and borne aloft, symbol of the hope and ultimate triumph of the genius of the Celtic race; and there, in the infinite Beyond, is Avalon."

We were wrong in stating that Mr. Glennie transports the stricken Arthur to Solway Firth—it is only Excalibur that he wafts thither after the culmination of the Arthurian romance at Arderydd. He speaks indeed "in parables"; but as Excalibur without Arthur would spell great impoverishment, we may perhaps think of that hero as present, healed and triumphant—present, at least, in spirit. We imagine, however, that Mr. Glennie means to distinguish between the historical Arthur, in whom he firmly believes, and the mythical Arthur at whom he hints, and one of whose attributes was the custody of the magic brand.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Some indication of the geographical, historical and ethnological relations of the North of England and the South of Scotland in early times has been given at the commencement of the preceding chapter. It is worthy of note that in the romances, just as we read of a Kingdom of North Wales, but not of South Wales, so we find frequent mention of Northumberland, but not of Cumberland, as an integral part of Britain. Thus, in the French romance of Lancelot, the Lady of Nochault sends to King Arthur begging for help against "le Roi de Norhombellande." What exactly the romancers understood by this territorial description is not clear, and it seems probable that to them it was vague and traditional rather than a district with sharply defined boundaries. The present county, at any rate, but poorly represents the vast tract the southern limit of which is plainly denoted by the name.

An obscure intimation that Northumberland once included Yorkshire occurs in the Mabinogi of *Peredur, the Son of Evrawc,* which opens with the words, "Earl Evrawc owned the Earldom of the North." The name of Peredur's sire is clearly identical or connected with the Roman name of York—Eboracum. Peredur, though the romances speak of him as Sir Perceval of Wales, appears to have been a thorough North Countryman and a companion of Merlin both before and after the battle of Arderydd. Thus in the *Vita Merlini* we are told:

Venerat ad bellum Merlinus cum Pereduro;

and again:

Solatur Peredurus eum.

"Peredur with steel arms" is one of the heroes mentioned in the *Gododin* as present at the battle of Cattraeth, in

which he is supposed by some to have fallen. Stephens identifies Cattraeth with Catterick, in Yorkshire. "We know," he writes, "that a tribe called the 'Ottadini' occupied the shores of Northumberland, from Flamborough Head to the Firth of Forth; and we know further that Deivyr and Bryneich were adjacent territories; and lastly we know that in the adjoining county of York there was a Roman town of note named *Cataracton*, and now called Catterick.[1] The bard says, 'The men of Gododin went to Cattraeth'; now Cattraeth must have been somewhere near. . . . It therefore appears to me perfectly clear that the subject of the *Gododin* is an expedition of the Ottadini against the town of Cataracton, then held most probably by the Brigantes."

The point is of very little consequence, but it may be noted that, in the Thornton Romance of Sir Perceval of Galles, the mother of that hero gives him, when a boy, "a lytille Scottes spere" — that alone of all her lord's accoutrements.

We have referred on a former page to the notable discovery at Hexham of a monument to Mabon, and, without recapitulating what has been there stated, may at once pass to the Roman wall, where, as Arthur is reputed to have been the leader of the Romanised Britons, we may naturally look for traces of him. It is in the neighbourhood of Housesteads, one of the stations of the garrison, that his memory is best preserved. To the north of the wall might have been seen in quite modern times the ruins of the ancient castle of Sewing Shields, or, as Sir Walter Scott names it, the Castle of Seven Shields. The latter appellation is at once more intelligible as well as more poetical, but probably both are variations of an original name, the exact form and meaning of which cannot even be conjectured. Camden calls the place Seavenshale. Legend avers that beneath the castle lie Arthur and his chivalry in an enchanted sleep. There is also a story that a certain adventurer, having found the passage leading to the sub-

[1] See, however, the section on the Firth of Forth, *infra*.

terranean palace, perpetrated a grievous mistake in his endeavour to reawaken the warriors, and was driven out in ignominy. The nature of his blunder may be inferred from the lines:

> O woe betide the evil day
> On which this witless wight was born,
> Who drew the Sword, the Garter cut,
> But never blew the Bugle-horn.

This tale, however, closely resembles another which belongs to a better-known resting-place of Arthur, in the Eildon Hills, and of which an account will be furnished subsequently. For the present, therefore, it is needless to say more on the subject.

Mr. Glennie compares the surface of the country hereabouts to billows, the northern faces of which show "fine precipitous crags"—Sewing Shields Crags, the King's Crags and the Queen's Crags. It is said that Arthur and Guinevere had some matrimonial dispute, and the former, from his seat on a rock called Arthur's Chair, flung a huge boulder at his consort. Fortunately for Guinevere, the missile fell short, and it is still visible on that side of the Queen's Crags. On the horizon of the sheep-farm of Sewing Shields is a great stone called Cumming's Cross, which marks the scene of an alleged tragedy. On this spot, says tradition, Arthur's degenerate sons waylaid and murdered a Northern chieftain, who had been their father's guest at Sewing Shields and was returning laden with the presents bestowed upon him by the generous monarch.

Lancelot's Castle Joyous (or, as it was termed after his betrayal of his royal friend, Dolorous) Garde is commonly identified with Bamborough Castle, which has a history going back to the sixth century, and is splendidly situated on a high rock jutting out into the North Sea. This belief appears to rest on no better foundation than an unusually weak *on dit* of Malory—"Some men say it was Anwick [Alnwick] and some men say it was Bamborow." At any rate, there seems to have been an impression in Malory's day that Sir Lancelot was a North Countryman. His name

suggests that he, perhaps alone among Arthur's knights, was of continental origin, but Celtic scholars are unwilling to grant this. Villemarqué regards "Lancelot" as a translation of the Welsh "Maël"—a name borne by a hero possessing Lancelot's characteristics. Lady Charlotte Guest offers a similar explanation. "Lancelot du Lac," she writes, "is generally considered as an exception to the general rule that all the heroes of the Arthurian romances are of Welsh origin. But it has been suggested to me by a learned antiquary that this distinction does not really exist, the name of Lancelot being nothing more than a translation of Paladr-ddlelt (splintered spear), which was the name of a knight celebrated in the Triads." We should have thought it just as probable that Lancelot is an Anglo-Norman disguise of some Celtic name. Such names occur. In the Mabinogi of *Kilhwch and Olwen* reference is made to Llawnrodded Varvawc and Llenlleawg Wyddel, and there may be better analogies. If Gwalchmai could become Gauvain or Gawaine, and Peredur Perceval, it does not seem by any means impossible that Lancelot may be the French form of a British name which it is now difficult to restore. In that case, or on the alternative assumption that it is a translation, the hero may have held Bamborough Castle for Arthur against the troublesome Angles, but if Lancelot was wholly the creation of Breton fancy, the notion of Joyous Garde being Bamborough must be abandoned as an unlucky guess. In a literary sense we owe Lancelot to Walter Map or Chrétien de Troyes; Geoffrey of Monmouth knows him not. If we consider his less meritorious qualities, his conduct with regard to Guinevere and Arthur, we shall be constrained to look upon him as a *trouvère* substitute for Melwas or Mordred, each of whom disturbed the even flow of Arthur's married life. Anyhow, there is an obvious difficulty in associating a knight bearing a name like Lancelot du Lac, which appears unchanged in a Welsh Triad, with the North of England. "Joyous Garde," too!

Another immigrant may be Bleys, Merlin's master, who,

Malory tells us, "dwelt in Northumberland." Such he would certainly be, were it safe to identify him—Bleys, "the Wolf"—with St. Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, who is stated by Geoffrey of Monmouth to have come to England on a missionary errand in Hengist's time. It would seem, however, that Bleys's business in life was not to preach to the heretically-minded, but to record, at Merlin's dictation, the history of Arthur's battles. It appears, therefore, that he may perchance be the same as a certain mysterious author about whom hints are dropped by mediæval writers. In the "Elucidation" prefixed to the rhymed version of *Perceval le Gallois*, one master Blihis is referred to who, it is surmised, may have been the author of the *High History of the Holy Grail*. Gautier de Denain, a continuator of Chrétien de Troyes, mentions Bleheris, a poet born and bred in Wales, as an authority for stories of Gawaine. Giraldus Cambrensis speaks of "famosus ille fabulator Bledhericus"; and Thomas of Brittany quotes Bréris as an authority for the Tristan story. In this vague personality we may possibly find our Bleys.

Lastly a young gentleman bearing the very French name of Breunor Le Noire, and nicknamed by Lancelot in that language La Cote Male Taille (the Evil-shapen Coat), is associated with Northumberland as a visitor. In his Introduction to the Romance of Sir Tristram, Sir Walter Scott identifies Bamborough Castle with the Chatel Orguilleux, Malory's Castle Orgulous, in which the uncouth young stranger gave such irrefragable proofs of prowess. In admiration of his valour, Lancelot gave to Sir La Cote Male Taille the Castle of Pendragon and all the lands thereof. In Westmorland there happens to be a Pendragon Castle which claims Arthur as its founder.

EAST LOWLANDS

I

Tweeddale

At Berwick, formerly Aberwick, we have another supposed site of Joyous Garde, and as the claim of the "good town" has been championed by two such eminent authorities as Sir Walter Scott and Dr. J. H. Burton, it at least deserves mention. In this district also is a little River Glen, which may perhaps be the Gleni, on the banks of which, according to Nennius, Arthur fought his first battle. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* gives a very detailed account of this affair. The reader will not have forgotten the Ottadani, whom Peredur appears to have supported in the Battle of Cattraeth. Long before the date of that engagement these people are said to have suffered from an invasion of the Angles, and, being hard pressed, retired into their fortress of Weavering, a lofty hill near the junction of the Glen with the Till. Arthur marched to their assistance, and first drew sword against the foreigners at the foot of the mount.

The Glen is now an obscure stream, but this, it seems, was not always the case. "Its position near the capital of Bernicia," it is explained, "and its celebrity from the ministration of Paulinus and the narrative of Bede, account for this river being mentioned without any allusion (as is the case of the Duglas) to the region in which it flowed."

Arthur's eighth battle is reported to have taken place near Gurnion Castle, but here again Nennius gives no indication of the locality. He does, however, state that Arthur, in this engagement, bore on his shoulders the image of the Holy Virgin, and, as one reading has it, the image of the Cross of Christ as well. Dr. Guest is apparently

suspicious of this addition and even more doubtful as regards a further statement, which, if received, would decide the site of the battle and render his different conjectures unnecessary. It is as follows: "For Arthur proceeded to Jerusalem, and there made a cross to the size of the Saviour's cross, and there it was consecrated, and for three successive days he fasted, watched and prayed before the Lord's cross, that the Lord would give him the victory, by this sign, over the heathen, which also took place, and he took with him the image of St. Mary, the fragments of which are still preserved in great veneration at Wedale, in the English Wodale, in Latin *Vallis doloris*. Wodale is a village in the province of Lodonesia, but now of the jurisdiction of the Bishop of St. Andrews, of Scotland, six miles on the west of that heretofore noble and eminent monastery of Meibros."

The reference is very plainly to St. Mary's Church, Stowe, just above which is a fine perennial spring called the Lady's Well. There was to be seen here also at one time a huge stone, which used to be pointed out as impressed with the trace of the Blessed Virgin's foot. Utilitarian considerations, however, prevailed in the making of a new road, and the stone was removed and broken to pieces.

At no great distance from the church General Roy finds the position of a Roman fort, which is naturally identified with the *castellum* mentioned by Nennius. Mr. Glennie believes Castle Gurnion (or, as he writes the name, "Guinnion") to be the Garanwynyon to which Taliesin alludes in a poem on the battle of Gwenystrad, or the White Strath; and he suggests that the White Stone of Galystem is probably the before-mentioned ancient landmark sacrificed in the interests of modern improvements.

In the neighbourhood of Stowe are the ruins of the Rhymer's Tower, so called on account of a former occupant, Thomas the Rhymer, oddly associated with the Arthurian legend of the Eildon Hills. Immediately to the south of Melrose rise the three summits—the Windmill of Kip-

pielaw, the Lucken Hare and the Eildon Tree—beneath which Arthur and his knights lie in a profound trance, from which they will not awaken till some bold adventurer summons them to life and consciousness by the sound of the bugle-horn.

How Thomas the Rhymer is mixed up with this tradition, which, as we have seen, is localised in a number of other places, is told in a very lively manner in an appendix to the general preface of *Waverley*. Having cited the opening chapter of a work of fiction which he saw fit to abandon, Scott proceeds:

"No more of the proposed tale was ever written, but the author's purpose was that it should turn upon a fine legend of superstition which is current in the part of the Borders where he had his residence, where, in the reign of Alexander III. of Scotland, that renowned person, Thomas of Hersildoune [Ercildoune], called Thomas the Rhymer, actually flourished. This personage, the Merlin of Scotland, and to whom some of the adventures which the British bards assigned to Merlin Caledonius, or the Wild, have been transferred by tradition, was, as is well known, a magician, as well as a poet and prophet. He is alleged still to live in the lady of Faery, and is expected to return at some great convulsion of society, in which he is to act a distinguished part, a tradition common to all nations, as the belief of the Mahommedans respecting their twelfth Imaum demonstrates.

"Now it chanced many years since that there lived on the Borders a jolly rattling horse-cowper, who was remarkable for a reckless and fearless temper, which made him much admired, and a little dreaded, amongst his neighbours. One moonlight night, as he rode over Bowden Moor, on the west side of the Eildon Hills, the scene of Thomas the Rhymer's prophecies, and often mentioned in his story, having a brace of horses along with him which he had not been able to dispose of, he met a man of venerable appearance and singularly antique dress, who, to his great surprise, asked the price of his horses, and began to chaffer

with him on the subject. To Canobie Dick—for so we shall call our Border dealer—a chap was a chap, and he would have sold a horse to the Devil himself without minding his cloven hoof, and would have probably cheated Old Nick into the bargain. The stranger paid the price they agreed on, and all that puzzled Dick in the transaction was that the gold which he received was in unicorns, bonnet-pieces and other ancient coins, which would have been invaluable to collectors, but were rather troublesome in modern currency. It was gold, however, and therefore Dick contrived to get better value for the coin than he perhaps gave to his customer. By the command of so good a merchant, he brought horses to the same spot more than once; the purchaser only stipulating that he should always come by night, and alone. I do not know whether it was from mere curiosity, or whether some hope of gain mixed with it, but after Dick had sold several horses in this way, he began to complain that dry bargains were unlucky, and to hint that, since his chap must live in the neighbourhood, he ought, in the courtesy of dealing, to treat him to half-a-mutchin. 'You may see my dwelling, if you will,' said the stranger; 'but if you lose courage at what you see there, you will rue it all your life.'

"Dicken, however, laughed the warning to scorn, and having alighted to secure his horse, he followed the stranger up a narrow footpath, which led them up the hills to the singular eminence stuck betwixt the southern and the centre peaks, and, from its resemblance to such an animal in its form, called the Lucken Hare. At the foot of this eminence, which is almost as famous for witch-meetings as the neighbouring windmill of Kippilaw, Dick was somewhat startled to observe that his conductor entered the hillside by a passage or cavern of which he himself, though well acquainted with the spot, had never seen or heard.

"'You may still return,' said his guide, looking ominously back upon him; but Dick scorned to show the white feather, and on they went. They entered a very long range of stables; in every stall stood a coal-black horse; by every horse lay

a knight in coal-black armour, with a drawn sword in his hand, but all were as silent, hoof and limb, as if they had been cut out of marble. A great number of torches lent a gloomy lustre to the hall, which, like those of the Caliph Vathek, was of large dimensions. At the upper end, however, they at length arrived where a sword and horn lay on an antique table.

"'He that shall sound that horn and draw that sword,' said the stranger, who now intimated that he was the famous Thomas of Hersildoune, 'shall, if his heart fail him not, be King over all broad Britain. So speaks the tongue that cannot lie. But all depends on courage, and much on your taking the sword or horn first.'

"Dick was much disposed to take the sword, but his bold spirit was quailed by the supernatural terrors of the hall, and he thought to unsheathe the sword first might be construed into defiance and give offence to the powers of the Mountain. He took the bugle with a trembling hand, and a feeble note, but loud enough to produce a terrible answer. Thunder rolled in stunning peals through the immense hall; horses and men started to life; the steeds snorted, stamped, grinded their bits and tossed on high their heads—the warriors sprung to their feet, clashed their armour and brandished their swords. Dick's terror was extreme at seeing the whole army, which had been so lately silent as the grave, in uproar, and about to rush on him. He dropped the horn, and made a feeble attempt to seize the enchanted sword; but at the same moment a voice pronounced aloud the mysterious words:

> Wo to the coward, that ever he was born,
> Who did not draw the sword before he blew the horn!

"At the same time a whirlwind of irresistible fury howled through the long hall, bore the unfortunate jockey clear out of the mouth of the cavern and precipitated him over a steep bank of loose stones, where the shepherds found him the next morning with just breath sufficient to tell his fearful tale, after concluding which he expired.

"This legend, with several variations, is found in many parts of Scotland and England—the scene is sometimes laid in some favourite glen of the Highlands, sometimes in the deep coal-mines of Northumberland and Cumberland, which run so far beneath the ocean. It is also to be found in Reginald Scott's book on Witchcraft, which was written in the sixteenth century. It would be in vain to ask what was the original of the tradition.[1] The choice between the horn and the sword may perhaps include as a moral that it is foolhardy to awaken danger before we have arms in our hands to resist it.

"Although admitting of much poetical ornament, it is clear that this legend would have formed but an unhappy foundation for a prose story, and must have degenerated into a mere fairy-tale. Dr. John Leyden has beautifully introduced the tradition in his *Scenes of Infancy*:

> Mysterious Rhymer, doom'd by fate's decree
> Still to revisit Eildon's fated tree;
> Where oft the swain, at dawn of Hallow day,
> Hears thy fleet barb with wild impatience neigh;
> Say who is he, with summons long and high,
> Shall bid the charmèd sleep of ages fly,
> Roll the long sound through Eildon's cavern vast,
> While each dark warrior kindles at the blast:
> The horn, the falchion, grasp with mighty hand,
> And peal proud Arthur's march from Fairy-land."

One of Thomas the Rhymer's predictions was as follows:

> When Tweed and Pawsayl meet at Merlin's grave,
> Scotland and England shall one monarch have.

This saying came true when James VI. of Scotland became James I. of England, since at that season the Tweed overflowed its banks and the river joined the burn close to the spot where Merlin is reputed to lie buried. Such an occurrence, says Dr. Pennecuick, the local historian, "was never before observed to fall out, nor since that time."

Merlin's grave is supposed to be near the village of Drummelzier. An old chronicler, Fordun, tells us in his

[1] See Introductory, however.

Scotichronicon that, after the battle of Arderydd, Merlin fled to the Nemus Caledonis, or Caledonian Forest, where he met Kentigern and was afterwards murdered by the shepherds of Meldredus, a chieftain dwelling on the banks of the Tweed, *prope oppidum Dunmeller*. "After the terrible defeat of the Pagans by the Christians in 573," writes Mr. John Lang, "Merlin found refuge among the hills of Upper Tweed, and there lived, for many years half-crazed, a homeless wanderer. Finally the fear raised by his supposed possession of supernatural powers and dread of his enchantments caused a mob of ignorant country-folk to club and stone him to death, and he was buried where he fell, by the Pawsayl burn." This seems to settle the direction in which, following Scots tradition, we shall look for Merlin's grave. Its exact situation, however, is a little uncertain. In the corner of a cornfield was formerly a cairn known as Merlin's Grave, but the true site of the tomb is believed by some to have been near an ancient thorn-tree, of which there is a flourishing offshoot, at the foot of the moraine where the kirk and the manse stand, and just above the junction of the Tweed and the Pawsayl. "For me," says Mr. Glennie, "not only the weight of authority, but the perennial thorn-tree decides the matter. For this is always introduced in the romantic fictions that represent his ladye-love Viviana as imprisoning Merlin." The white thorn-bush is sometimes introduced, but not always. Malory follows another version, to which we shall refer later.

Hereabouts, in the heart of the Caledonian Forest, appears to have been fought Arthur's seventh battle, which, Nennius says, took place "in the wood Celidon, which the Britons call Cat Coit Celidon." *Cat* or *Cad* means "battle," and *Coed Celyddon* "the wood of Caledon." Skene therefore understands the expression "Cat Coit Celidon" as referring to the battle itself, not simply the place in which it was fought. This is not perhaps quite certain. The name of Battle in Sussex shows how an event of that kind may pass into a place-name. One of the sites

suggested for Arthur's seventh battle is Cademuir, a hill near the Tweed. Cademuir is supposed to represent *Cad more* ("the great battle"). On the whole, Professor Veitch is in favour of this selection, but he does not altogether reject another choice—the Lour, a prehistoric hill-fort, near Dawick. Till the beginning of the nineteenth century, he informs us, there stood just below the height of the Lour an almost perfect cromlech consisting of "two or three upright stones and one laid across as a roof, all of remarkable size."

II

Firth of Forth

Arthur is stated to have fought four battles on the Dubglas, or Duglas, "in the region Linnuis." A contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1842 suggests that by the Duglas is meant "the little River Dunglas, which has formed through successive ages the southern boundary of Lothian." On this assumption the "region Linnuis" would be Lothian. Having driven the enemy from their entrenchments on the Dunglas, Arthur is conjectured to have again encountered them beside the channel which separates the mainland from an isolated rock in the Firth of Forth called the Bass. Nennius, however, plainly speaks of the River Bassas, so that the later hypothesis, at any rate, is not very acceptable.

Proceeding in the direction of Edinburgh, we arrive at Trapender, formerly Dunpender — the traditional burial-place of Llew, or Lothus, King of Lothian. As King Lot of Lothian and Orkney, he is frequently mentioned in the *Morte Darthur*, where he is said to have married Margawse, one of the three daughters of Uther Pendragon and the mother of Gawaine.

Arthur's installation of Llew, or Lot, as tributary King of Lothian, is thought to have provoked the battle of

Mynyd Agned, the eleventh in Nennius's list. This supposes that Mynyd Agned, the Painted Mount, is Edinburgh, which was the southern stronghold of the Picts. In Giles's translation of Nennius the passage runs: "The eleventh (battle) was on the mountain Breguoin, which we call Cat Bregion," but he mentions another reading, "Agned Cathregonion," and identifies the site with either Cadbury in Somerset or Edinburgh. There is much confusion here, and more than ordinary interest attaches to Skene's elucidation: "*Brith* forming in the feminine *Braith*, diversicolor, maculosus, and *Brych*—the equivalent in Cymric of the Gaelic *Breac*—macula. Both refer to the name Picti, or painted; and Agned probably comes from an obsolete word *agneaw*, to paint, *agneaid*, painted." This, if correct, clearly points to the Picts, not the Saxons, as Arthur's antagonists on this occasion. Cæsar tells us that the Britons stained their bodies a blue colour, but Rhys connects the word Briton, or Brython, with *brethyn*, cloth, and thus makes the Brythons a clothed or cloth-clad people. The Picts, in any case, were a painted race, as were the Scots, unless that name signifies tattooed; and Skene's explanation suggests another derivation for "Briton" than that which the learned professor proposes.

Edinburgh is the Castle of Maidens of the romances—even in such grave documents as the charters it is styled Castrum Puellarum. It might have been mentioned that on the eastern, or Cumbrian, side of Liddesdale is a hill called Arthur's Seat, just as at Newcastle there is an Arthur's Hill. As we have shown in the course of this work, there are, in different parts of the United Kingdom, many localities that bear the name of Arthur's Seat or Arthur's Chair, but it is a safe assertion that not one of them is so generally known as the mount at Edinburgh. Here, at least, it is by no means "a name of yesterday." Before the end of the fifteenth century the Scottish writer Kennedy, in his "flyting" with Dunbar, makes mention of "*Arthur Sate* or ony hicher hill."

At Caredin, on the shore of the Firth of Forth, where

the Roman wall terminates, Skene places the site of the battle of Cattraeth—not at Catterick, in Yorkshire, or at Galashiels, in Selkirk, or at Kelso, in Roxburgh, the latter two places being those named by Mr. Pearson, one of which he thinks was probably the scene of the combat. Skene fixes the date of the battle at 596, and informs us that the rival forces were those of the Britons and the Scots on the one hand, and those of the pagan Saxons and half-pagan Picts of Manau Guotodin, or Gododin, on the other. Manau Gododin was the district in which Mynyd Eiddin —as Edinburgh is called in the *Black Book of Caermarthen* —was situated.

Caer Sidi, which seems as if it could be nowhere but in Wales, is transported by the relentless Mr. Glennie to Inchkeith, in the Firth of Forth. He, with his fellow-labourer, Mr. Skene, believes Caer Sidi to be the Urbs Judeu of Nennius and Bede's island-city of Giudi; and they can see reasons for placing the latter on Inchkeith, though Mr. Pearson assigns Judeu to the Jedburgh district.

"There sank to the bottom five and twenty hundred, so that all Avon's stream was bridged with steel." This is a quotation from Layamon's *Brut* referring to Arthur's twelfth battle, that on Mount Badon. As an allusion to the Avon in Somerset, on which Bath is situated, it would not be surprising, and it is more than likely that Layamon intended it to be understood in that sense. It so happens, however, that there is a Scottish Avon which flows past a striking eminence known as Bouden Hill, not far from Linlithgow. There would seem to be no doubt whatever that on and around this hill, which is fortified with double ramparts, blood has been poured out like water. Sibbald, in his *Account of Linlithgowshire* (1710), thus describes it:

"On the Buden Hill are to be seen the vestiges of an outer and inner camp. There is a great cairn of stones upon Lochcote Hills, over against Buden, and in the adjacent ground there have been found chests of stones with bones in them, but it is uncertain when, or with whom, the fight was."

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The mystery may now be considered as cleared up—at any rate by those who see in the battles of which Nennius writes a series of campaigns fought out in Scotland. "I venture," says Mr. Skene, "to identify Bouden Hill with the Mons Badonicus."

If Mount Badon is in Scotland, this is equally the case with Camlan. Mr. Skene, indeed, professes amazement that there should ever have been any doubt on the subject, and, it must be allowed, his argument is very telling. "It is surprising," he writes, "that historians should have endeavoured to place this battle in the south, as the same traditions, which encircle it with so many fables, indicate very clearly who his antagonists were. Medraut, or Modred, was the son of that Llew to whom Arthur is said to have given Lothian, and who, as Lothus, King of the Picts, is invariably connected with this part of Scotland. His forces were Saxons, Picts and Scots, the very races Arthur is said to have conquered in his British campaigns. If it is to be viewed as a real battle at all, it assumes the appearance of an insurrection of the conquered districts under Medraut, the son of that Llew to whom one of them was given."

Quite consistently with this view, Skene places the battle of Camlan at the little town of Camelon, near Falkirk.

Near Larbert was once Arthur's O'on (Oven). Many years ago its inappreciative owner destroyed this relic, which is thought to have been a Roman structure. There is no question of the high antiquity either of the thing or the name. A grant by William Gourley to the monks of Newbotle, in 1293, refers incidentally to the *Furnum Arthuri* within the Barony of Dunypas.

Mention of this lordship recalls the fact that Mr. Skene makes it the scene of Arthur's sixth battle—that on the River Bassas. The existence, or rather former existence, of Arthur's O'on had long been notorious, and anyone bent on Scottish identifications of Arthurian localities would naturally be attracted to the neighbourhood. Scenically, the most notable features in Dunipace Park are two

conically shaped hills, or mounds, of the kind which appear to be known as "basses." As no river in Scotland is named Bassas, Mr. Skene inclines to believe that it is these "basses" that have furnished the name of the battle, respecting which Nennius was under a misapprehension. "The name Bass," he writes, "is also applied to a peculiar mound having the appearance of being artificial, which is found near the river, though really formed by natural causes. There is one on the Ury river, in Aberdeenshire, termed the Bass of Inverury, and there are two on the bank of the Carron, now called Dunipace, erroneously supposed to be formed from the Gaelic and Latin words *Duni pacis*, or hills of peace, but the old form of which was *Dunipais*, the latter syllable being no doubt the same word Bass. Directly opposite, the River Bonny flows into the Carron, and on this river I am disposed to place the sixth battle."

Mr. Glennie does not think the Park of Dunipace a likely spot for a great battle, but he points out that, on the farther side of the Carron, and almost directly opposite the mounds, is an immensely larger "Bass" in the angle formed by the junction of the Bonny with the Carron. This is a natural stronghold, and Mr. Glennie argues that, if any fighting took place between Arthur and his foes in this neighbourhood, it most probably occurred in a contest for the possession of this fastness. Otherwise he appears to be in agreement with Mr. Skene.

In a macaronic mixture of tongues not uncommon in mediæval writers—especially where proper names are concerned—William of Worcester records: "Rex Arturus custodiebat le round table in Castro de Styrlyng, aliter Snowden West Castell." Snowdon, in this context, is just another name for Stirling, and has nothing to do with the mountain of that name in North Wales. As says Sir Walter Scott in the *Lady of the Lake*:

> Stirling's tower
> Of yore the name of Snowdown claims.

And an older poet, Sir David Lindsay, writes:

> Adew, fair Snawdoun with thy towris hie,
> Thy Chapell-royall, park, and *Tabyll Round*.
> May, June, and July would I dwell in thee,
> Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,
> Whilk doth agane thy royal rock rebound.

The Table Round at Stirling is of the same type as that which we found at Penrith, and consists of a mound with a flat surface, around which is a series of embankments, seemingly very ancient. Here, it is said, in mediæval times, was held a sport called "Knights of the Round Table," in which the institutions of King Arthur were commemorated. Locally this Table Round is more commonly known as the "King's Knot."

On the Links of Forth Mr. Skene places the site of Arthur's tenth battle, and in doing so makes a valiant and successful attempt to deal with the terribly perplexing name Trath Treuroit.

"There is much variety in the reading of this name," he writes, "other MSS. reading it Trath Truiroit; but the original Cymric form is given us in two of the poems in the Black Book; it is in one *Trywruid*, and in the other *Tratheu Trywruid*. There is no known river bearing a name approaching to this. *Tratheu*, or shores, implies a sea-shore, or sandy beach, and can only be applicable to a river having an estuary. An old description of Scotland, written in 1165 by one familiar with Welsh names, says that the river which divides the 'regna Anglorum et Scottorum et currit juxta oppidum de Strivelin' was Scottice vocata Froch, Britannice *Werid*.' This Welsh name for the Forth at Stirling has disappeared, but it closely resembles the last part of Nennius's name, and the difference between *wruid*, the last part of Nennius's name Try-wruid, and *Werid* is trifling. The original name-form must have been Gwruid or Gwerid, the *G* disappearing in combination."

It will have been noticed that in the above passage Mr. Skene tells us that *tratheu* means shores, and implies a sandy beach. It would seem that this bit of erudition was

within the knowledge of Tennyson, for in his *Lancelot and Elaine* the gallant knight speaks of himself as having been with Arthur

> Up in Agned Cathregonion too
> And down the waste *sand shores* of Trath Treroit.

This slight touch shows how conscientiously the poet must have prepared himself for his important part in what may be termed the Arthurian Renascence of the nineteenth century. It would, however, be too much to say that it commits the poet to any formal theory concerning Arthur's wars.

III

Strathmore

In the parish of Cupar Angus is a standing stone which is known as the Stone of Arthur; and not far from this is a country-seat called Arthur's Stone. Near that, again, is a farm called Arthur's Fold. These facts may be taken to show that Arthur is not forgotten in the Pictish land to the north of the Firth of Tay, but here, as is natural in Mordred's country, the interest in the "Flower of Kings" is rather painful. The convergent testimony of many legends makes Barry Hill, with its double line of entrenchments, the castle to which Mordred carried off Guinevere, after worsting her husband and his own uncle in a pitched battle. Tradition represents her as not unwilling: "Vanora held an unlawful intercourse with Mordred; and Arthur, when he received her again, enraged at her infidelity, caused her to be torn to pieces by wild horses." This was the story told to the poet Gray when he was on a visit to Glamis Castle, and the information seems to have astounded him, for he writes: "Passed through Meigill, where is the tomb of Queen Wander, that was riven to death by stoned horses for nae gude that she did—so the woman here told me, I assure you."

"Ganore's Grave," at Meigle, is only a few miles distant from Barry Hill. According to a tradition reported in the *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, she was buried at Meigle, and "a monument erected to perpetuate her infamy!" This consisted of two representations of wild beasts tearing a human body—and one where the body seems tied to wheels—which may relate to Vanora, or may have given rise to the tradition. Mr. Glennie, on a personal inspection of some curious sculptured stones in Meigle churchyard, found that the subjects had been correctly reported, though he tells us that the worthy Archdeacon Sinclair, writing in the year 1560, expresses the view that the figures are "Ane goddess in a cart, and twa horses drawand her."

Before proceeding farther, it may be as well to say something about the name of this victim of love or folly. In Welsh, as we have seen, it is Gwenhwyvar or Gwenhwyfar. In the Anglo-Norman romances this becomes Guenièvre, while in the English metrical romances shorter forms prevail—Wannour, Wannore, Gonore, Ganor, Gaynore, etc. Skelton also writes:

> And dame Ganour, his quene,
> Was somewhat wanton, I wene.

Returning to "Gonore's Grave," Bellenden states, "all wemen abhorris to strampe on that sepulture." The great battle between Lothus, King of the Picts, and his son Mordred, on the one side, and King Arthur on the other —the cause of Guinevere's abduction, or her elopement—where did that take place? A confused tradition states, on the East Mains of Dunichen, in Forfarshire.

There appears to be much more in this countryside story than one might have imagined, and Sir J. Rhys propounds an interesting theory on the subject.

"Irish mythic history," he writes, "derives the Goidelic people of Ireland from two brothers called Emer and Airem, or Erem, respectively. . . . It is possible to produce a case where the popular fancy seems to have given Arthurian names to the *dramatis personæ* of the Airem

story. This we believe to have been the case with the group of supposed Arthurian legends on the borders of the counties of Perth and Forfar, north of the Sidlaw Hills, in Scotland." (For Airem see p. 136.)

After setting forth the tale before related, and the evidence on which it is founded, Rhys proceeds:

"The district indicated may be said to abound in legends involving Arthur's name, and the question is how they came there, especially as it is doubtful whether any Brythonic people ever had their home so far north in this island, and as nothing Arthurian seems to be known in the tract of country between Perth and Stirling. The most satisfactory answer that can be suggested is that some story about Airem had long been familiar in the non-Brythonic parts of Scotland, which, generally speaking, agree far more closely in the matter of folklore and legend with Ireland than with Wales; and that, among other appropriate spots, Barry Hill had been fixed on as the scene of a part of the story.

"So, when literary Scotchmen or Norman adventurers had made the people of the Lowlands familiar with the Arthurian romances, the substitution of the names Arthur, Wanor and Mordred for the less generally known ones, handed down by the descendants of the Goidelic conquerors of the district above-mentioned, would follow pretty much as a matter of course. And when we are told (*New Statistical Account of Scotland*), in reference to the Barry Hill legends, that the people have a tradition which makes Queen Wander not only into a badly behaved wife, but a malignant giantess, that seems the echo of the legends respecting an etain rather than of the more widely-known romances about Gwenhwyvar. The substitution of names could not be more readily accounted for than on the supposition of the mutual resemblance, evident to all, of the tales in question about Arthur and Airem respectively. The result for us is the singular appearance of an Arthurian oasis, so to say, in the midst of a non-Arthurian land."

The question of Lancelot's nationality here crops up

again. We have already stated that M. de la Villemarqué regards Lancelot as identical with a Cymric chieftain named Mael. Now Mael means "servant," and by assuming *ancelot* to be a diminutive of *ancel*, which also means "servant," and prefixing the definite article, we get the full name Lancelot. Villemarqué finds proof in bardic writings that Mael had lands in Scotland; and Mr. Glennie points out that in the romances Lancelot is always spoken of as the son of "le roy Ban de Benoic." Where was Benoic? Mr. Glennie finds the answer in the Scottish *Lancelot*,

> A Kyncht clepit Lancelot of ye Laik,
> That son of Bane was King of Albanak.

Albanak, or Alban, was the name applied to the part of Scotland beyond the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and Mr. Glennie conjectures that the kingdom of Lancelot's father was on the east, because it is stated in the French romance of *Lancelot du Lac* that King Claudas of Scotland made war upon him. This might seem to exclude all possibility of Benoic being anywhere in Scotland; but Mr. Glennie would understand the expression "la terre d'Escosse" to be limited to the western kingdom of the Scots of Dalriada—at any rate, he moots that explanation. It is very uncertain where Benwick really was, or was supposed to be, but Malory, though he does not profess to know its exact longitude and latitude, has no doubt that it was on the Continent. "Some men call it Bayonne, and some men call it Beaume, where the wine of Beaume is."

WEST LOWLANDS

I

Ayr and Strathclyde

Galloway—including the western portion of Dumfriesshire, Kirkcudbrightshire and Wigtonshire—is represented in the romances as the patrimony of Sir Gawaine, son of King Lot of Lothian. In one place Malory speaks of a great many knights, of whom he tells us no more than that they were all of Scotland, "either of Sir Gawaine's kin or well-willers to his brethren." These nameless heroes may have been men of Galloway—a region which is singularly bare of Arthurian interest. Being a Pictish territory, it is in that sense outside the borders of Arthur's country. As for Gawaine, Arthur's nephew, there is no surer trace of him locally than the "topographical record" of Kirk*cowan*—an exceedingly doubtful explanation of that place-name. We pass therefore to Ayr and Strathclyde—Cymric lands.

The results are somewhat disappointing. In the large county of Ayr it is difficult to lay hold of much distinctly connected with Arthur—a fact which may be accounted for by the later memories of Wallace and of Bruce (both natives of the south-west of Scotland) having overlaid and smothered the older traditions of which Arthur was the centre. On Dundonald, it is said, St. Monenna founded a church after Arthur's triumphs over the heathen; and his earliest victory may have been at the mouth of the River Glen, which rises in the mountains that divide Ayrshire from Lanarkshire and falls into the Irvine, in the parish of Loudon.

We come to Strathclyde, and here research becomes

more fruitful. In the parish of Crawford is a well called Arthur's Fountain. It has borne this name for centuries, since in a grant to the monks of Newbotle, in 1339, by David de Lindesay, we find that the lands extended "a fonte Arthuri usque ad summitatem montis."

The term Strathclyde is used in a wider and narrower signification. It is employed to indicate the whole of the country occupied by the northern Cymry from Glasgow to Penrith,[1] but the name suggests that it ought properly to be confined to the districts bordering on the Clyde. Here Mr. Glennie places the kingdom of Rhydderch Hael, who took part in the memorable battle of Arderydd, and with whom Merlin was associated.

The Cymric form of Lanark would have been *Llanerch* ("a glade"), and it is quite possible that the region is referred to in a famous stanza attributed to Merlin, and of which he is at least the subject. Stephens translates:

> Sweet apple-tree, growing in the lonely glade,
> Valour shall secure thee from the lords of Rhydderch.
> Bare is the ground around thee, trodden by mighty warriors;
> Their heroic forms strike their foes with terror.
> Alas! Gwendydd loves me not, greets me not;
> I am hated by the chiefs of Rhydderch;
> I have ruined his son and his daughter.
> . . . . . .
> I am not soothed with diversion,
> I am no longer visited by the fair;
> Yet in the battle of Arderydd I wore golden torques,
> Though I am now despised by her who is fair as snowy swan.

Somewhere in North Britain was a country called Goddeu or Goden. Frequent mention is found of this region in the Welsh poems — e.g. in Taliesin's ode on the battle of Argoed Llwyvain, where "Flamddwyn" is represented as hastening with four divisions to fight the forces of Goddeu and Rheged. Mr. Glennie thinks that the former district corresponded with the middle ward of Lanarkshire, and that its name is preserved by Cadzow Castle, overhanging

[1] And even as far south as Bedford; see map in Green's *Short History of the English People*.

the Avon. A Welsh composition entitled *Cad Goddeu*, or *The Battle of Goddeu*, contains the remarkable lines:

> Minstrels were singing,
> Warriors' bands were wondering,
> At the exaltation of the Brython
> That Gwydion effected.

The "exaltation" in question, according to Mr. Skene, "was the alliance between the Brython, represented by Llew (or Lothus), and the Gwyddel by Gwydion, which resulted in the insurrection of Medraut (or Mordred), son of Llew, against Arthur, with his combined army of Picts, Britons and Saxons, and which arose from a section of the Britons in the North being drawn over to apostasy by the pagan Saxons and semi-pagan Picts." It is hard to reconcile this account with the description of the poem in Lady Charlotte Guest's note on the Mabinogi of *Math, the Son of Mathonwy*, supplemented by another on the tale of *Kilhwch and Olwen*. These convey the impression that the Cad Goddeu, or Battle of the Trees, belongs rather to mythology than history. It was all on account of a white roebuck and a whelp brought from Hell by Amathaon, or Amaethon ab Don. This act of spoliation led to a battle between Amathaon and Arawn, King of Annwn (Hell). The singular thing about this conflict was that on one side was a man who was invincible so long as his name remained unknown, whilst on the other was a woman called Achren whose name had to be kept secret if her party were to prevail. Gwydion guessed the name of the man, and this gave the victory to his brother Amathaon. In one of the Triads the battle is styled one of the three frivolous battles of the island of Britain. It is said to have been about a bitch, a hind and a lapwing, and to have cost the lives of seventy-one thousand men. One wonders what it had to do with Arthur, or why it should be thought that the Battle of Camlan was an "exaltation" of the Britons.

Calderwood is conjectured to be the Forest of Calaterium, from which, according to Merlin's prophecy, a heron was to come forth which should fly round the island for

two years together, summoning with her night-cry the winged kind. The army of birds was then to swoop on the cultivated fields and devour the grain, thereby causing a terrible famine and grievous mortality among the people. (Geoffrey's *British History*, Book VII. chap. iv.)

In one of the Lives of Gildas it is stated that he was the son of Caunus, who reigned in Arecluta, i.e. the country on or along the Clyde. This appears to have been the district between Strathclyde and Ayrshire formerly known as Strathgryfe, and comprehending the modern county of Renfrew. The proper name of the Cumbrian chieftain—Latinised as Caunus—was Caw; he was commonly called Caw Cawlwydd or Caw Prydyn. One of his many sons was Gildas; and when Caw was driven from his possessions by the Saxons, his family is said to have sought refuge with Arthur, who gave them a hospitable welcome.

In Renfrewshire are three Arthurian localities—places called Arthur Lee, Low Arthur Lee and West Arthur Lee.

The great city of Glasgow can be connected with Arthur only indirectly through Kentigern, better known as St. Mungo. Kentigern, it will be recollected, had an interview with Merlin the Wild in the Caledonian Forest, and very possibly in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, then known as Caer Clud or Penryn Wleth.

II

Lennox

Rheged, or Reged, is usually thought to have been a district of Cumbria just north of Solway Firth. Mr. Glennie places it to the east of Loch Lomond, while Mr. Skene refers to a passage in the *Bruts* in which Arthur is said to have driven the Picts from Alclyde into "Mureif, a country which is otherwise termed Reged." The Picts took refuge in Loch Lomond there, and therefore, says Mr. Skene, Loch Lomond must have been within the borders of Reged,

or Mureif. He adds that the district must have been on the north side of the Roman wall or *Mur*, from which it took its name Mureif. If Reged was called Mureif after the Roman wall, we should naturally conclude that it was in the neighbourhood of Antonine's massive work between the Clyde and the Forth. But are we bound to assume the identity of Reged, or Rheged, with Mureif? It would seem so. Geoffrey of Monmouth certainly speaks of Urien as King of Mureif, and we are almost driven to the conclusion that Rheged, instead of being a maritime country along Solway Firth, lay much farther north.

The story of Arthur's expedition against the Picts is worth repeating—as a topographical fairy-tale.

The Scots fled before him and betook themselves to the Lake Lumonyw, in which were sixty islands and sixty rocks, and on each an eagle's nest. Every first of May these came together, and from the sound of their voices the men of that country knew what should befall during the coming year. And sixty rivers fell into the remarkable lake, but only one river ran from the lake to the sea.

Arthur soon dislodged his opponents from their stronghold, the singularity of which excited no small surprise in the mind of Howel, the son of Emyr Llydaw, who accompanied him. But when Howel expressed his wonder at it, Arthur told him that there was a still more marvellous lake not far from there, which was twenty feet long and twenty feet broad, and consequently square; and it contained four different races of fishes, and a fish was never found in a part of the lake occupied by a race to which it did not belong. Finally Arthur referred to Llyn Llivan, near the Severn, the eccentricities of which have been already set forth.

In the *Memorabilia* of Nennius, the name of the one river which flows out of Loch Lomond is given as *Leum*, i.e. the Leven. The physical wonders of this district are almost equalled by its philological facts as educed by Mr. Skene and Mr. Glennie. "Lennox, Leven and Lomond," writes the latter, "are all one word; and district, river

and lake are all mentioned in the poems and old historical sources. The original word is, in its Cymric form, *Llwyfain*; in its Gaelic form *Leamhain*, an elm-tree. From the latter comes *Leamhanach*, corrupted into Levenachs, or Lennox, of which the Cymric equivalent is *Llwyfenydd*. But the old form of *Leamhan*, of which Leven is a corruption, was *Leoman*, with the *m* not as yet aspirated; and from this comes Lomond. Thus we have the old form adhering to the loch and the mountain, while the river adopts the more modern."

We have before alluded to the poem on the battle of Argoed Llwyfain, one of the few compositions attributed to Taliesin which Stephens allows to be genuine, and in which Urien and Owen are depicted as bidding defiance to the "Flame-bearer," who is usually considered to have been Ida, King of Northumberland.[1] Mr. Skene places Argoed Llwyfain along the north-eastern shores of Loch Lomond. That writer, however, indulges in much bolder identifications. Nennius states that Arthur's ninth battle took place "in urbe Leogis qui Britannice Kairlium dicitur." To Mr. Skene it is plain that Kairlium is not, as has been too hastily assumed, Caerlleon-upon-Usk, or Chester, but Caer Leum, the city on the Leven—in other words Dumbarton, which is described in a parliamentary record of David II. (1367) as Castrum Arthuri, and, according to tradition, was the birthplace of Mordred.

Dumbarton is situated at the junction of the Leven and the Clyde. It has therefore been identified not only with the Kairlium of Nennius, but with the Alclyde, or Alclud, of the *Bruts* and the Welsh lyric poets. It was at Alclyde that Arthur encountered the Scots and Picts before driving them into Loch Lomond. Other ancient names which Mr. Skene and Mr. Glennie have discovered for Dumbarton are Nemhhur, or Nevtur, and Cathraig, in Leomhan; but one point of more general interest appears to have escaped both writers, and that is, the high degree of probability that Alclyde, or Alclud, is Astolat.

[1] Rhys suggests Theodric.

"Malory's Astolat," writes Professor Rhys, "is otherwise called Escalot, a name which cannot be overlooked as identical with that of Shalott borne by an islet moored by lilies in the river flowing down to Camelot. The original of the name, which variously appears as Shalott, Escalot, Astolat, and other forms, was probably Alclut, the old Welsh name of the Rock of Dumbarton, in the Clyde."

On the western shore of Loch Lomond is Glen Douglas, where Skene places Arthur's four battles "in the region Linnuis." Here, he says, "Arthur must have penetrated the 'regiones juxta murum' occupied by the Saxons. Dubglas is the name now called Douglas. There are many rivers and rivulets of this name in Scotland; but none could be said to be 'in regione Linnuis' except two rivers —the Upper and Lower Douglas which fall into Loch Lomond, the one through Glen Douglas, the other at Inveruglas, and which are both in the district of the Lennox, the Linnuis of Nennius. Here, no doubt, the great struggle took place; and the hill called Ben Arthur, at the head of Loch Long, which towers over this district between the two rivers, perpetuates the name of Arthur in connection with it."

Isolated discussion of the sites of Arthur's battles is apt to be tedious, and occasionally one is tempted to ask why it should be thought necessary to fix, let us say, the battle of Mount Badon in Scotland, when a famous city like Bath is the scene with which it is traditionally associated. Such a choice may even savour of caprice, until we find that each of Mr. Skene's identifications has its place in a general scheme in which his various conjectures afford one another mutual support.

"According to the view I have taken," he writes, "Arthur's course was first to advance through the Cymric country on the west, till he came to the Glen, where he encountered his opponents. He then invades the regions about the wall, occupied by the Saxons in the Lennox, where he defeats them in four battles. He advances along the strath of the Carron as far as Dunipace, where, on

the Bonny, his fifth [sixth?] battle is fought; and from thence marches south through Tweeddale, or the Wood of Celyddon, fighting a battle by the way, till he comes to the valley of the Gala, or Wedale, where he defeats the Saxons of the east coast. He then proceeds to take four great fortresses: first *Kaerlium*, or Dumbarton; next Stirling, by defeating the enemy in the *tratheu Tryweryd*, or Carse of Stirling; then *Mynyd Agned*, or Edinburgh, the great stronghold of the Picts, here called *Cathbregion*; and lastly Bouden Hill, in the centre of the country between these strongholds."

This is a consistent and brilliant hypothesis, to which only one objection can be taken—namely, that, as the effect of Saxon conquests, there are very many places, in districts formerly Cymric, which have been renamed or the names of which have been distorted out of all possibility of recognition. In other words, it is in accordance with experience and geographical knowledge that widely distant places have the same name, which easily leads to confusion. This being so, Mr. Skene's ingenious theory that Arthur's campaigns were all in North Britain cannot be deemed to be absolutely proved, although, as an intelligible explanation of alleged events, it has obvious advantages over any rival doctrine, for which it is not feasible to quote so unfailingly combined legendary and topographical chapter and verse.

We say "alleged events," because even Mr. Skene does not claim to have reconstructed history. He wisely observes: "In thus endeavouring to identify the localities of those events connected with the names of Cunedda and of Arthur, I do not mean to say that it is all to be accepted as literal history, but as a legendary account of events which had assumed that shape as early as the seventh century, when the text of the *Historia Britonum* was first put together, and which are commemorated in local tradition."

We ought to observe that Mr. Skene is much too dogmatic with regard to the time of Nennius, on which there

have been wide differences of opinion. Professor Ker, in his *Dark Ages*, puts him, or his history, "about the year 800." Dr. Guest observes that it is far from certain at what period the history was written. Conjectures range from 796 to 994, while the date given in the prologue of the work itself is 858.

BRITTANY

I

General

Towards the close of the previous section we alluded to the probability—indeed, certainty—of the occurrence of the same Celtic names for different localities as an obstacle to the full and frank acceptance of Mr. Skene's conclusions. Taking up Mrs. Gosling's excellent translation of M. Anatole Le Braz's book *The Night of Fires*, not an Arthurian work, but a study of the Breton life of to-day, we come upon such passages as the following:

"For some time the road skirts ruddy hill-sides and amber-green valleys, for *Cornouailles*, with its well-to-do mien, extends part of the way."

"Not longer ago than last week, the little shepherd-boy at *Caërléon* came flying up to the farm, all out of breath, his feet bleeding, and his face as pale as a winding-sheet. 'Jésus—Dieu!' cried old Léna, terrified. 'What is it?' 'What is it?' repeated the boy. 'Why, I have just heard l'Ankon (Death) telling Mikaël Inizan that he is reaping to-night in the neighbourhood of *Caërléon*."

What are we to infer from the occurrence in Brittany of such names as those which we have italicised? What, as to that, from the name Brittany itself? An answer is provided in the tales of migrations from Great to Little Britain. For a poetical version of one of these versions we may turn to *The Dream of Maxen Wledig*, in the Mabinogion. It is odd to find Emile Souvestre solemnly discussing the historical likelihood of the insular heroes cutting out the tongues of their Armorican wives to prevent the children learning any other language than that of their sires, but the acceptance of details is not necessary to the

general consistency of such narratives, which, in the widest sense, cannot be proved to be false. Not only does Gildas inform us that, under the stress of Teutonic invasion, many of the Britons fled oversea, but, if we may believe the testimony of the Triads, colonising movements had taken place before the outward pressure became extreme, and it was the weakened state of the country consequent on the loss of its armed warriors that led to the incursions of the Picts and Vortigern's inauspicious alliance with the Saxons.

Countless instances might be given of colonists bestowing the names of towns and districts in the "old country" on their nascent settlements, and thus we seem to have a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon to which we have drawn attention. Sir John Rhys, however, is profoundly sceptical with regard to these waves of colonisation.

"Pliny," he writes, "speaks of Continental Britanni, who seem to have lived near the Rhine and the North Sea. . . . Procopius, a Greek writer of the sixth century, gives a very fabulous account of an island called Brittia, which he distinguishes from Britannia. One of the latest writers on this difficult subject (M. de Vit) identifies Brittia with Jutland, and supposes Brittones from beyond the Rhine to have shared the advance of the Teutons on Gaul, and to have settled in Brittany. That is doubtful, but it is a fact, though never noticed, that Brittia must have been a real name, as it is exactly the form that would result in that which is the actual Breton name of Brittany —namely, Breiz; this last is the shortest, and cannot be derived from any known form of the kindred name of our country or of its people, which tells not a little against the tradition that Brittany was colonised by fugitive Brythons from here; not to mention the fact that there is some difficulty as to whence those fugitives could have come, seeing that if they set out from the nearest parts of this country, that is from Cornwall and Devon, they would most likely have been Goidels, so that the language

of the Bretons would probably be a Goidelic dialect, and not the purely Brythonic speech it is. This view would give Breton an importance never yet attached to it."

It is possible that the inhabitants of south-west Britain were Goidels—the earlier branch of the Celtic race with whom the Brythons fought for supremacy—but, if so, it is strange that Stephens, who ought to have known, declares that the Breton dialects bear a closer resemblance to that of Cornwall (now no longer spoken, but of which there are literary remains) than to the language of the Principality. Moreover, the Triads distinctly state that the British who passed over into Armorica originated, not from Cornwall, but from South Wales.

The question as to the name Breiz presents a much greater difficulty, and suggests that in the westward movement of the British division of the Celts Brittany was a temporary halting-place, and that a nucleus of them never left it. Around this nucleus may have gathered the multitudes which, for one reason or another, abandoned the mountains of Wales and settled in Lydaw. The relations between the insular Britons and those of the Continent, in Arthur's time, seem to have been friendly and intimate. We read of Bishops Samson and Teilo going to and fro from one country to the other, whilst the closeness of the ties between the two countries has been a source of much uncertainty and confusion in the case of Gildas.

Suppose, however, that Rhys, whose authority in such matters is very great, is correct in all his conjectures—suppose that "Breiz" was the motherland of the Britons, and that Cornwall was a land of Goidels; then some interesting possibilities arise, such as that Arthur was a prince not of the Cornwall in Britain, but of the Cornouailles, or Cornouaille, in Brittany. We have seen that the Welsh bards placed his court at Gelliwic, in Cornwall—a spot not easy to localise. It might have been in the land of the Geli Lydaw (the Gauls of Letavia, i.e. the country of Vannes and Quimper). It appears fairly evident that the connection between Arthur and Caerlleon was first established by

Geoffrey of Monmouth. Whence did Geoffrey derive his information? According to his own account, from a book which Walter Mapes, Archdeacon of Oxford, brought from Brittany. This book is said to have been in the British tongue and Geoffrey's history purports to be a translation of it. As there is a Caerleon in Brittany as well as in Wales, it does not appear unlikely that legends had grown up around the former place which were transferred to the latter.

With all due deference to Sir John Rhys, it does look as if Brittany were colonised from Britain, and mainly from those portions of it from which he thinks it unlikely they can have come. This is a reasonable deduction from the ancient divisions, the little kingdoms, found there in the sixth century. Of these Cornouaille, between the Elorn and the Elle, was one. But there was also Donnonée, or Domnonia, situated between the mouths of the Couesmon and the Morlaix rivers. Other divisions were the Vannetais and Poher, the latter actually a part of Cornouaille. All were independent until Conorre, or Conmore, the ruler of Poher, for his own ends, became the vassal of Childebert, King of Paris, in 520; and with the aid of his suzerain seized on the lordship of Donnonée, a name which, unlike Cornouaille, has vanished from the geography of Brittany. A further point is that the term Cornouaille does not apply, like Cornwall, to the whole of the peninsula, but only to a part of it. In so far then as it describes a horn-like projection of land—and it is hard entirely to reject this etymology—it would obviously suit the configuration of the south-western extremity of Britain much better than that of the southern portion of Finistère, to which it was apparently given later and in remembrance of the former. However mythical we may deem the accounts of Conan Mériadec and his successors, the weight of the evidence seems to be in favour of a reflux of the population from Britain to Armorica, but, even if this be admitted, we are not obliged to conclude that the Arthurian legend was carried over with it, and there is every probability

that it was, at the very least, coloured by the associations of those by whom, as Geoffrey alleges, it had been transmitted.

II

The Pays de Tréguier

From these wider considerations we turn to particular examples, some of which are sufficiently striking. The localisation of Carduel in Britain was a problem of some difficulty, but in Brittany the matter is quite simple. In the Pays de Tréguier, between Lannion and Perros-Guirec, but off the main road, and in the parish of Pleumeur-Bodou, stands the château of Kerduel. Only the name is important, for there is little else to interest the visitor, and certainly nothing to call up visions of the glorified Carduel of romance. But, as T. A. Trollope observes, "lovers of early romance will hardly think that labour lost which places them on a spot so celebrated in the chronicles of the period as the favourite residence of King Arthur. Here places and names surround us with which the romances of the Round Table have made us familiar, but to which Fancy has assigned a locality in Fairyland rather than in any veritable portion of the earth's surface. Here the half-fictitious personages whose adventures have in so many forms amused us, and the mystic performers of those deeds which have bequeathed to Europe an heroical literature of her own, have 'a local habitation and a name.'"

The same writer quotes M. de Freminville to the following effect:

"Here it was that Arthur, surrounded by his noble peers Lancelot, and Tristan, and Karadec, and Yvain, and the rest, held a brilliant court, of which his wife Guenarc'han and the beautiful Brangwain were the ornament and pride."

Probably no name has undergone so many transformations as that of Arthur's queen, and on a previous page we have recorded a number of variations. In Guenarc'han we have apparently the primitive Breton form, which is said to mean "white as silver."

Not far from Kerduel, just off the coast, is the islet of Aiguilon, or Avalon, which, the Bretons contend, was the spot to which the stricken king was borne—not to Glastonbury at all. Trollope, writing in 1840, declares that the fable of his existence in Fairyland and his eventual return to rule over his faithful subjects on both sides of the Channel is "firmly believed by the peasants in some parts of Brittany to the present day." The tradition has been explained in this way: The fairy Morgain—a name which should be written "Mor-gwen," signifying "the whiteness of the sea"—was in reality a Druidess dwelling on the island. On the shore of the mainland, over against the Isle of Avalon, are stretches of quicksands; and the rationalist teaching is that Arthur was caught in these treacherous sands when following the chase or engaged in some other adventure. The bards idealised this incident into the story of Arthur having been carried off by the fairy Morgain to the (Breton) Avalon and detained in her enchanted isle.

"It is certain," writes Trollope, "at least as certain as anything can be relating to a period so remote, and at best but semi-historic—that Arthur possessed dominions in Brittany as well as in Wales; and the country between the Rivers Gaudy and Guer is supposed by M. de Fremin-ville to have been ruled by him during the early part of the sixth century. In the romances which celebrate his adventures, we find him as often in one country as the other."

The Grève de St. Michel, a sandy shore once crossed by the highway from Lannion to Morlaix, has a share in the Arthurian Legend. As to what occurred exactly traditions vary, but we may perhaps pay special heed to the version preserved by the old monk of Morlaix, Albert le Grand, who has gathered up much of the folklore of the province

in his *Vies des Saints de la Bretagne Armorique*. According to this authority, Arthur fought with a dragon on this beach, then bordered by a dense forest, for a livelong day. Neither of the combatants could claim the victory; and, as both were tired out with their exertions, the monarch retired to his tent and the monster to his den, each of them resolved to renew the contest on the morrow. It so happened, however, that St. Efflam, an Irish prince and a cousin of King Arthur, was occupying a hermitage on this very spot, and when the hero came and requested his intercession for a happy issue of the combat, he asked to be permitted to deal with the dragon in his own fashion.

So, having passed the night in fervent supplication, the saint repaired in the morning to the mouth of the monster's den, and, throwing himself on his knees, prayed earnestly that the country might be delivered from the ravages of this terrible scourge. When he had ended, the dragon came out of his hole, and immediately, says Albert le Grand, "monta sur un haut rocher, et delà, roulant les yeux de tous costez, fit un sifflement si horrible et effroyable que tout le rivage en retentit, baissant la teste, et vomit grande abondance de sang; puis, descendant dans la grève, s'alla précipiter dans la mer, où il mourut suffoqué des eaux."

At a short distance beyond the sands of St. Michel the road quits the sea-coast, and in a little while the traveller finds himself at Lanmeur, in Finistère. This village, says tradition, covers part of the site of a once-flourishing town called Kerfeuntein; and the fountain from which the name was taken is yet visible in a curious crypt under the church. The place is remembered in popular tradition as the scene of wholly apocryphal occurrences in the domestic life of King Arthur which have been worked up into one of the open-air plays, lineally descended from the "mysteries" of the Middle Ages, which were the joy and pride of the Breton peasantry. They were very long, the performance lasting six days, and the amateur actors were humble folk. Trollope, who was fortunate enough to witness the exhibition of one such play, *The Life and Death of St. Helen*, and

whose work contains a grotesque illustration of the stage and the spectators, supplies an amusing description of the crude "properties" with which the enthusiasts had to make shift and were probably quite content.

"There was the pope with his triple crown very ingeniously constructed of coloured paper, a black petticoat for a cassock, a shirt for a surplice, and a splendid cope made of paper hangings, and with the twofold cross in his hand. There were two kings with paper crowns, adorned with little waxen figures of saints, and arrayed in printed cotton robes, carrying in one hand a sword, and in the other a cross. Three or four wore the uniform of the national guard, and the remainder made any addition they could to their usual costumes which they thought would contribute to the general effect. The female characters were all sustained by men dressed as much like the usual costume of ladies as their knowledge and resources would admit. A very fine young man, six feet high by two and a half at least broad, was selected to personate St. Helen, who was dressed entirely in white, with a large tablecloth for a veil!"

Among these plays were *Sainte Barbe*, *La Création*, *Jacob*, *Pharaon*, and other Biblical and legendary dramas. Only one of them is dated, and that was written in the year 1530. But the age of *Sainte Triffine*, which is our main concern, is fairly established by the circumstance that, in Arthur's count of the towns in Brittany subject to his authority, no mention is made of L'Orient, which, in point of fact, is of no great antiquity. According to M. Fouquet, it was founded not more than two hundred and fifty years ago.

In his *Les Derniers Bretons*, Souvestre gives a detailed analysis of this tragedy, *Sainte Triffine*, lamenting that most of its charm evaporates in French prose. We must be content with a much briefer summary. The plot, as we have hinted, is impossible to reconcile with common stories of Arthur, who appears to be confused in some extraordinary way with the detestable Conmore, the husband

of Gildas's friend Tryphena, the prototype of the Triffine of the play. The tales, however, are in many respects distinct. The time of the action is in 508, which coincides with the traditional Arthurian era, but the Arthur of the rustic drama is a purely Breton prince, the throne of "England" being occupied by one Abacarus, a doughty warrior of whom insular history knows nothing. Other characters in the play are as imaginary as Abacarus. Triffine, the heroine, is apparently a memory of Tryphena, but she appears in the drama not only as the much-to-be-pitied wife of Arthur, but as by birth a princess of Ireland. She has an evil genius in the person of her brother Kervoura, who is the villain of the piece, and out of an absurd fondness for the ailing Abacarus perpetrates unnatural crimes. He is prepared to immolate Triffine's babe, born in his new mansion at Kerfuntun, so that, complying with the directions of a sorceress, his royal friend may drink the infant's blood and thus recover his youth. He kidnaps the child, but is foiled in his cruel purpose by the intervention of Flemish pirates, who board the ship in which the boy is being conveyed to Britain and save his life.

Not satisfied with this injury, Kervoura succeeds for a time in ruining his sister's wedded happiness. She is constrained to wander forth an exile from her husband's court, and when by good fortune she is restored to Arthur, the hateful Kervoura cunningly throws her into the embraces of lewd soldiers, with the result that Arthur, stung by the spectacle of her shame, orders her to be brought to trial, and she is sentenced to be beheaded. She mounts the scaffold, and has already laid her head on the block, when some knights come galloping up at full speed, and a child, with whom is the Bishop of St. Malo, enjoins on the soldiers to stop the execution. He tells Arthur that he is his son and Triffine's, and has been reared by the holy bishop. He also presents his nurse, whom Arthur recognises. (The existence of the boy was a secret to both parents, since at the time of his birth Arthur had been

in "England," whilst Triffine had been informed by her rascally brother that she had met with a miscarriage.)

Kervoura, who stands by, intent on witnessing the poor queen's unjust punishment, pronounces the boy's story a tissue of lies, and is at once challenged by the youthful hero to a judicial combat. They descend into the lists, but Triffine's son has the succour of the Archangel Michael, and his adversary is smitten with blindness. The boy stabs his dastard uncle to the heart, and Kervoura falls a corpse. The drama ends happily, for the royal pair are completely reconciled and there is universal rejoicing.

III

The Léonais

In our section on Lyonnesse, it was pointed out that in the *Morte Darthur* knights travelled to that country on horseback, and therefore it seemed impossible that Sir Edward Strachey could be right in his suggestion that the district of St. Pol de Léon, in Brittany, could be intended. It must be recollected, however, that we have constantly recalled to us that Malory's narrative is based on French originals, and the Cornwall to which they allude may be confused, if not identified, with the Cornouaille of Bretagne. In that case, nothing could be simpler or more natural than for people to ride from one division of the Breton peninsula into another immediately adjacent. Further than that, so great is the similarity between the forms Léonais and Lyonnesse, that it seems a moral certainty that the latter is a corruption of the former. For this is not one of those cases in which we may fairly assume the priority of the British place-name. The adjective Léonais is derived, on an intelligible principle and according to regular grammatical usage, from the proper noun Léon. It is true that for Lyonnesse may be claimed such analogies as Dungeness, where "ness" (doubtless from the same root as

"nose") signifies a promontory. There are very many such instances among the Orkney and Shetland Islands, on the coast of Caithness, and in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Grisnez, on the north coast of France, is a name of the same type. It is evident, however, that this explanation is much less probable than the former, since Lyonnesse was more than a mere headland—it was an ample tract of country, as extensive as that embraced by the term Léonais.

Mention of Lyonnesse inevitably reminds us of Tristram. So far as we are aware, the name of that knight and lover does not occur in the Léonais, but it is somewhat significant that off the coast of Cornouaille is the Île Tristan. In the *Morte Darthur* Tristram's connection with Cornwall is hardly less intimate than with Lyonnesse.

The submergence of Lyonnesse, which we may now recognise as merely another name for the Léonais, suggests that the district of which St. Pol de Léon was the capital formerly extended considerably to the west of the present coastline, and this, as we shall see, is extremely probable. The subject of inundations, in its Breton aspects, will engage our attention presently. Meanwhile it may be as well to indicate that the phenomenon, if not purely an affair of the imagination, was not of so isolated a character as would be inferred from the tradition best known to the average reader, but of which, we believe, there is simply no trace in the Léonais itself.

The name St. Pol de Léon has been supposed to date from the period of the Welsh migrations, the reality of which it reflects. Mr. Baring-Gould has no doubt whatever as to the substantial truth of these stories, and writes confidently: "In or about 514 Rhiwal arrived from South Wales with a large fleet in the Bay of St. Brieuc, and founded the principality of Domnonia, and rapidly extended his authority over the whole of Northern Brittany. Another swarm came from Gwent, now Monmouthshire, where existence had become insupportable owing to the incursions of the Saxons over Calder and Westloog levels

and the valleys of the Usk. The Gwentian colony planted itself in the north-west of the Armorican peninsula, and called it Leon, or Lyonesse, after the Caerleon that had been abandoned."

A highly intelligent lady writer of the early nineteenth century—Miss Anne Plumptre—points out that off the coast near St. Pol de Léon is a small bay called Penpoul; and she suggests that, as the former place stands on a bay, Pol ought to be *Poul*, and Pol de Léon *Poul* de Léon. She thinks that in course of time the *u* may have been dropped and the legend of a saint attached. If there is anything in this hypothesis, it gives some countenance to the tale of a drowned Lyonnesse. It is noticeable, however, that all along the north coast are places named after saints —St. Brieuc, St. Malo, etc. But St. Pol de Léon is certainly exceptional. If St. Pol has not replaced *poul*, it would appear that the original name Léon was amplified, owing to the dedication of the church to St. Pol.

Mr. Baring-Gould, who does not deal tenderly with the Breton legends, supplies an account of St. Pol which almost brings that holy man within the Arthurian cycle.

"St. Pol, or Paulus Aurelianus," he writes, "was a native of Glamorganshire. He was born about the year 480, and was summoned by a prince of the name of Mark to regulate the religious affairs of his little realm. Where this was, we do not well know; whether this was the Mark, husband of the fair Yseult, or another, we are not informed. However, Paul had a quarrel with the king over a hammered bronze bell, which Paul wanted and the king would not surrender. Paul stole the treasured bell and made a bolt with it to Brittany. With him were not only twelve priests of the community, but also twelve laymen of noble birth, with their wives and families, all Paul's kinsmen, and a large number of serfs and retainers. They landed first in the Island of Ouessant, where Lampaul still bears his name, but a storm-swept island did not suit him, and after a few months' tarry there he crossed to the mainland, and a good many of his lay-attendants settled and founded

plous [clans] in the neighbourhood of Lampaul and Ploudalmezeau. There he spent two years, and after that went to the Isle of Brehat, to visit the British chieftain Gwithur, from his own part of South Wales, who had established himself as a prince over Léon. He found him very aged, reading a book of the Gospels. The old Welshman welcomed him with enthusiasm, and entreated him to give ecclesiastical organisation to the large colony that had settled in Lyonesse, and recommended him to found a *lann* [church] and make his headquarters among the ruins of an old Gallo-Roman town, where now stands St. Pol de Léon. The old Welsh apostle lived to a great age. He died in 572. The bell he carried off with him from King Mark is still preserved in the cathedral, and is reputed to be miraculous."

In a footnote Mr. Baring-Gould observes that "in the legend it is said that Paul asked for the bell, but was refused it, and therefore in a huff deserted the charge of the people in the principality of King Mark, and that when he reached Brittany a fish was brought to table with the bell in its mouth. This is nonsense. That St. Paul ran away with it seems to be the truth of the matter. The bell is almost certainly of the sixth century."

We shall find hereafter that King Mark—he of the horse's ears—had dominion in Brittany, but, postponing further reference to this subject, let us call attention to an ancient fortified enclosure in the neighbourhood of Huelgoat, which bears the name of *Le Camp d'Artus*. It is situated on the top of a hill, and of an irregular quadrilateral form, its greatest diameter being rather less than four hundred paces. The ramparts rise to a considerable height, and at one end is a mound, on which may be traced the remains of a large tower.

M. Freminville supposes that "Arthur's Camp" was the residence of one of those Breton chiefs of the fifth or sixth century, leaders of independent tribes, who, from having absolute power, were styled kings by the early chroniclers. Trollope, who visited the spot, is unwilling to recognise in

this chief the Arthur of romance. "As to the name," he says, "it does not seem necessary to refer to the celebrated hero of the Round Table all the legends which are attributed to chiefs of that name. For the name Arthur was a favourite one; and the ancient Armoricans had many celebrated chiefs so called. In fact, it is probable that, as in the case of the feats of ancient Hercules, many of the deeds and adventures heaped by the romancers on the head of their favourite hero ought in justice to be divided among a number of his namesakes." We cannot profess much sympathy with this iconoclastic theory, preferring to see in *Le Camp d'Artus* a Breton analogy to the many British names apparently imposed as a compliment to the greatest of their kings. The immense diffusion of place-names recalling Robin Hood is against the doctrine that more than one outstanding personage is contemplated.

Trollope is perhaps on safer ground in suggesting that the tower was later than the earthworks, and was in fact an early feudal residence such as was constituted by a single isolated tower. In choosing a position, the warlike lord might naturally pitch upon a spot already fortified to his hand.

The name Huelgoat makes us think of Howel the Great; we take it to mean Howel's Wood. The town is not far from the Ménéz Arés chain, and one of the hills, the highest ground in Brittany, goes by the name of Mont St. Michel. On its conical summit is a solitary little chapel, the cynosure of all the country. Is it not possible that here, and not at the Mont St. Michel in the bay of that name, the terrible fight took place between Arthur and Dinabuc, the Spanish giant and cannibal who slew Howel's niece, or, as Malory reports, his wife and children? The great tyrant is said by that writer to have borne rule in "the country of Constantine, *beside* Brittany," a statement which, though vague, seems opposed to the mount being within the confines of Armorica. On the other hand, there is not the least hint of an approach by sea; it is distinctly recorded that Arthur, Sir Kay and Sir Bedivere *rode* to the spot.

"Then he called unto him Sir Kay and Sir Bedivere, and commanded them secretly to make ready horse and harness for himself and them twain, for after evensong he would ride on pilgrimage with them only unto St. Michael's mount. And then anon he made him ready and armed him at all points and took his horse and his shield. And so they three departed thence, and rode forth as fast as ever they might, till that they came unto the foot of that mount."

Unless, therefore, we assume a vast topographical change, and that "the country of Constantine" lay where is now the roadstead of Cancale, there is some reason to suspect that the Mont St. Michel in the Léonais may be the place intended. It is haunted. "In the district of Carhaix," writes Miss Plumptre, "is a mountain called St. Michael, whither it is believed all dæmons cast out of the bodies of men are banished; if anyone sets his foot at night within the circle they inhabit, he begins running, and will never be able to cease all the rest of the night. Nobody, therefore, ventures to this mountain after dark."

Drayton, improperly it would appear, identifies the ogre with Rhitta, or Ryons, saying of Arthur that

> great Rython's self he slew in his repair,
> Who ravish'd Howell's niece, young Helena the fair;
> And for a trophy brought the giant's coat away,
> Made of the beards of kings.

In the *Morte Darthur*, Howel is the Duke of Brittany and cousin of King Arthur, but probably, like Arthur himself, he may at one time have claimed divine honours, and it would seem that even now, in his own country, his celestial status is maintained. "Perhaps in no other region of Brittany," writes Le Braz, "has the ancient Celtic nature-worship remained so unaltered as in this valley of Traoun-Mériadek. . . . Lift up your eyes to the heights around. Notice the grand solemn promontories where the sun, the Breton Heöl, own brother to Helios, the Greek, walks every morning, wrapped in the first pure shimmerings of his delicate light, and at evening leaves his long rays of sumptuous purple trailing behind him. Is it sur-

prising that generations of Celts have looked upon this place as his sanctuary, an open temple dedicated to him whom they still call 'the King of Stars,' the god whose radiant presence is all the sweeter to them from being so rarely vouchsafed in their sombre climate?" (*Land of Pardons*, Mrs. Gostling's Trans.)

Arthur is said to have held his court at Landerneau, and even to this day there is a proverb, when anything of importance occurs in the neighbourhood, "il y aura de bruit à Landerneau," as if the great folk who once had their habitation there were still present and retained an interest in mundane affairs. So far as we can discover, however, the impress of Arthur is by no means so strong as that of Lancelot, who is here at home. On the outskirts of the forest of Landerneau is the traditional site of the Château de la Joyeuse Garde, the ruins of which consist of an ancient gateway and a large vault. The remains belong to a much later period than the age of Lancelot du Lac and the lovely Guinevere, and it is impossible that they can ever have resided in the castle, although it has been supposed that the vault, with its round and massive arch, is older than the upper construction. Nevertheless, the name "Joyeuse Garde" is so striking that it is hardly likely that there were historically two or more castles distinguished by that appellation, and one is almost compelled to believe that in some way the story of Lancelot, who, more than any of the Knights of the Round Table, appears to belong to Brittany, became part and parcel of its traditions. But it was not by Lancelot that the name was bestowed.

"In the sixth century," writes Trollope, "the coast of the Léonais was dreadfully ravaged by Danish pirates; and the thick forest which then covered the whole country around the bottom of the Bay of Brest served as a place of refuge to many of the inhabitants. They took with them thither, from the more exposed parts of the coast, their cattle and the most portable part of their property, and established themselves in a sort of camp near the spot

where the castle then stood. While they were living thus in great anxiety and continual fear, St. Thénénan, who had sailed from Ireland, his native country, to preach the gospel in Armorica, arrived in the bay. As soon as ever the sentinel, who was on guard outside the camp, saw the ship, he cried out, being animated by a miraculous knowledge of the saint's approach, that a servant of God was come to deliver them from their apprehension and misery. The saint was honourably received, and, as he was conducted into the camp, all the forest resounded with the cry, 'Merbet a joa a eus er goard'; which means, 'They are leading a great cause of rejoicing into the guard.' From these words the castle which stood near and protected the camp was called 'Kastell joa eus er goard'; which the French 'accoutumez,' as the old Dominican of Morlaix, who gives the history of the origin of the name, tells us, 'à tordre le nez à notre Breton pour l'accomoder à leur idiôme, traduisent par Château *de le Joyeuse Garde.*'

"There is some pretty scenery," adds Trollope, "about the mouth of the River Elorn and the adjoining shores of the bay, which in some parts reminded me of bits of New Forest scenery on the banks of the Southampton water. With the exception of that rich and adorned air of cultivated and improved beauty, which marks a wealthy and highly laboured country, and which is rarely found to any great extent out of England, there are many points of general resemblance between these two woodland districts."

IV

Cornouaille

Immediately in front of the little maritime town of Douarnenez, famous for its sardine fishery, and in the bay of that name, stands the Île Tristan, which is supposed to have been so called after Sir Tristram of Lyonnesse. No local legend relating to him, however, appears to have survived, and the islet is chiefly celebrated as the haunt and stronghold of the atrocious Fontenelle le Ligueur. To the east of the town is a small village called Plomarc'h, and here are pointed out the foundation-stones of the palace of King Marc'h, or Mark, the nephew of Arthur, and the husband of Yseult, who is therefore described as "le Roi de Plomarc'h," or sometimes as "le Roi de Portzmarc'h." In Wales, however, we have found the name Parch Amheirchion as that of the monarch, not of the territory over which he ruled; and Miss Plumptre, in her *Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in France*, has preserved a Breton version of the Midas-story connected with him, in which the name is similarly personal.

"A king of this country," she writes, "whose name was Porzmarch, had ears like a horse; and, to prevent his misfortune being publicly known, he used immediately to put to death every barber to whom they had been exposed. He was once shaved by an intimate friend, on whose fidelity he thought he could rely for keeping the secret, and his life was therefore spared. But his friend, unable to resist the longing that he had to tell the secret, told it to the sands on the sea-shore, when immediately three reeds sprang up on the spot; and the musicians of the country taking them to make pipes, every time they played upon them these words were distinctly repeated: 'Porzmarch, King Porzmarch has the ears of a horse.'"

It is possible that this remarkable tale originated in Ireland. Anyhow, in the *Revue Celtique* (ii), Dr. Stokes gives an Irish account, which diverges from the Welsh and Breton narratives, and is to the following effect:

Once upon a time there was a King of Ireland whose name was Labraid Lorc, and this is the manner of man he was—he had two horse's ears on him. And anyone who shaved the king used to be slain forthwith. Now the time of shaving drew nigh one day, when the son of a widow in the neighbourhood was enjoined to do it. The widow went and besought the king that he should not be slain, and he promised her that he would be spared if he would only keep his promise. So it came to pass; but his secret so disagreed with the widow's son that he fell ill and nobody could divine the cause until a Druid came by. He at once discovered that the youth was ill of an uncommunicated secret and ordered him to go to the meetings of four roads. "Let him," said he, "turn sunwise, and the first tree that meets him on the right side let him tell the secret to it, and he will be well." The tree to which the story was told was a willow; and a famous Irish harper of that day, finding that he wanted a new harp, came and cut the makings of a new harp from that very tree, but when the harp was got ready, and the harper proceeded to play on it, not a note could he elicit but "Labraid Lorc has horse's ears."

Commenting on this folk-tale, Sir John Rhys amusingly remarks, "Our neighbours on the other side of the Channel have a technical name for that sort of sufferer"—he refers, of course, to the widow's son—"they say of him that he is *malade d'un discours rentré*, or ill of a speech which has got into the patient's constitution, like the measles or small-pox when it fails to come out."

About a league out to sea, beyond the extremity of that dangerous headland the Pointe du Raz, is the Île de Sein, said to have been the birthplace of Merlin. Nearly all writers on the ancient history of Brittany assume, as at one time did Sir John Rhys, the identity of this island

with that of Sena, to which the first-century geographer Pomponius Mela makes interesting allusions. Situated in the Britannic Sea, over against the coast of the Osismi, Sena was famous, he tells us, for its oracle of a Gaulish god. Here also were priestesses, living in the sanctity of perpetual maidenhood, to the number of nine hundred. They were styled Gallizenæ, and reputed to possess miraculous powers. They could rouse wind and sea by their incantations. They could turn themselves into the similitude of any animals they liked, heal otherwise incurable diseases, and discern and foretell things to come. They were devoted to the service of mariners, and the object of many a voyage was to consult the holy virgins in their island retreat.

Nothing might seem safer, in the province of etymology, than to find in the Sein of the moderns the Sena of the ancients. It appears the essence of simplicity, whereas an alternative explanation, which commended itself to the mature judgment of Sir John Rhys, is extraordinarily complex. It may not be necessary to remind the reader that Seithennin was the drunkard responsible for the loss of fertile acres now plunged beneath the waters of Cardigan Bay. This, then, is the interpretation which Sir John favours:

"Seithennin is represented in later Welsh literature as the son of one Seithyn, associated with Dyfed; and the name Siethyn leads off to the coast of Brittany. For I learn from a paper by the late M. de Men, in the *Revue Archæologique* for 1872, that the Île de Sein is called in Breton Enez-Sun, in which Sun is a dialectic shortening of Sizun, which is also met with as Seidhun. That being so, one would seem to be right in regarding Sizun as nearly related to our Seithyn. That is not all—the tradition reminds one of the Welsh legend; M. de Men refers to the *Vie du P. Mannoir*, by Boschet (Paris, 1697), p. 126, and adds that in his own time the road ending on the Pointe du Raz, opposite the Île de Sein, passed 'pour être l'ancien chemin qui conduisait à la ville d'Is (Kaer-a-Is, la ville de la partie basse).' It is my own experience that nobody

can go about much in Brittany without hearing over and over again about the submerged city of Is. There is no doubt that we have in these names distant echoes of an inundation story, once widely current in both Britains and perhaps also in Ireland."

The concluding observation removes the subject from the region of local history to that of comparative mythology, but some students regard an inroad of the sea in Brittany and Wales as well within the limits of probability. Somewhere or other Mr. Baring-Gould has discovered evidence that, about the time of the "subsidence" along the west coast of Wales—between 500 and 550—Gulval, the sister of St. Pol de Léon, was complaining to her brother that her lands on the bay of Mont St. Michel were being submerged; and that where the bay is now was then a forest, in which were several religious houses. He declares, further, that in one of the islets of the Morbihan are two cromlechs or circles of standing stones now under water; and, finally, that in the Étang de Laval, dividing the extreme western promontory and covering the supposed city of Is, can be traced substructures. Trollope even goes so far as to state that the names of the streets yet live in the tradition of the fishermen of the coast.

In *Les Derniers Bretons* Souvestre writes: "There existed there [at Penmarc'h] a great town destroyed by Fontenelle le Liguer, and a little farther off may be found, according to tradition, the site of the city of Ys, engulfed by the sea. The pilots will still show you, in the offing between Guilvinec and Penmarc'h, fifteen or twenty feet under the water, Druidical stones which are descried at low tides, and were none other than the altars of the engulfed city. Thirty years ago these venerated stones were the object of a religious ceremony. Every year the priests would come in a boat to offer the holy sacrifice above them, whilst the crowd, rushing together in all the barques of the bay, prayed around, recollected and on their knees. Strange spectacle, which used so vividly to recall the transition from the ancient worship of the Celts to the

worship of the Christians. Still stranger picture—that of a whole people praying over this dead town, as over the tomb of an ancestor."

We have seen that Mr. Baring-Gould assigns the mighty irruption of the ocean to the former part of the sixth century. This late period seems to us irreconcilable with both Welsh and Breton traditions, while the Cornish legend of a lost Lyonnesse—not yet lost in Arthur's time —implies a date even later than that suggested by Mr. Baring-Gould! The tragedy in Cardigan Bay preceded the birth of Taliesin, which occurred in the fifth century of our era; that on the coast of Brittany, if we may rely on the evidence of an inscription preserved by Albert le Grand, which might formerly have been seen on the tomb of Gradlon, or Grallon, the Great in Landevenec Abbey, probably took place in the fourth century. It was in this monarch's reign that the magnificent city of Is, his capital, was blotted out from the category of existing things, and he is stated to have died in 408. Ancient chroniclers describe him as "handling the affairs of his realm with a haughty spirit," but his rhyming Latin epitaph applauds his clemency—"mild as a lamb." Referring to this discrepancy Daru observes, "mais on ne peut pas chercher à mettre d'accord les épitaphes et l'histoire"—an excellent epigram, but not an axiom.

With the unimportant difference that the agent of destruction was water, not fire, the case of Is resembles that of the Cities of the Plain (unless a better analogy is the world before the Flood), for the old Canon of Quimper, Moreau—historian of the League—declares very solemnly that the awful catastrophe was caused "par une juste punition de Dieu, pour les péchés du peuple de ladicte ville d'Is."

Neither the pride and cruelty of the king nor the sins of his subjects might have drawn upon the city Divine vengeance in so terrible a form, had it not been for the wickedness of the Princess Ahès, or Dahut, who reminds us of Catharine II. of Russia, and whose enormities cried

aloud to Heaven for a fitting penalty. Her father doted on her, and, although he deplored her profligacy, made no effort to restrain her. The princess dwelt in a high tower, where she entertained her lovers; and, when she grew tired of them, they were flung down into a well at its base. One night her paramour for the nonce asked her for the key of the sluice-gates; and, to content him, Dahut crept stealthily into her father's chamber, and took the silver key from the neck of the slumbering king.

What followed is not quite clear. It is imagined that the lover opened the sluice-gates by inadvertence, or that Dahut herself undid the lock as an act of mad folly. Be that as it may, Grallon was aroused in the dead of night by a voice bidding him make haste to escape, since the waters were flooding his city. The sound of the inrush smote his ears, and without delay he sprang on his horse and rode away. As he did so, he heard the voice of his beloved daughter imploring him to save her. He stopped and took her up behind him. Meanwhile the deluge gained on them, and his horse was struggling knee-deep in the waves, when there came a cry, "Cast away the demon from behind thee, Grallon!" Dahut loosened her hold, and sank back in the surge, whereupon the sea retreated, and has never since advanced beyond the estuary in the village of Poul David, or Poul Dahut, where she met with her death. Dahut, it is averred, still haunts the neighbourhood which she made infamous with her crimes; and at night the trip of horse-hoofs may be heard beneath the hillside.

Mr. Baring-Gould gives a somewhat different version of the story, in which he brings in St. Wingaloe, or Guénolé, although he confesses that there is no mention of the incident in the Life of that holy man. It is said—not by Mr. Baring-Gould—that Carhaix takes its name from that of the detestable princess, after whom it was called Ker-Ahès, but this, to say the least, is extremely problematical. "A sort of jaw-hole, or abyss," writes Trollope, "is still pointed out between Huelgoat and Carhaix, which this

vixen of a princess used as a second—or rather first—Tour de Nesle. Every morning the lover of the preceding night was pitched by the orders of this abandoned woman into this terrible hole. And, what is still more remarkable, you may still hear the noise of the victims' groans and sighs rising incessantly from the secret recesses of this awful pit, with a low, melancholy, hollow sound resembling, some think, the noise of distant water running among echoing caverns."

According to Mrs. Katherine S. Macquoid, the lost souls of the lovers of Dahut wander in the Baie des Trépassés, and in the night the fisherman hears them crying and wailing piteously.

We have entered at considerable, but not, it may be hoped, unnecessary length, into this subject, because here we seem to find the clue to the legend of Lyonnesse. Tristan, whose name, as we have seen, has been preserved in the immediate vicinity, may have been a Léonard, but the deluge which most vividly impressed the imagination of the Bretons happened on the coast of Cornouaille. Under the circumstances some confusion was not unnatural. No doubt the incident was much exaggerated, and the story, as we now have it, can hardly be received as authentic.

Just above we alluded to the Baie des Trépassés, or the Bay of the Departed, which stretches at the foot of the cliffs on one side of the dreaded Pointe du Raz. Trollope holds it as unquestionable that Claudian, the Roman poet of Alexandria who flourished at the end of the fourth century, had this bay in his mind when he penned the lines:

> Est locus, extremum pandit qua Gallia litus,
> Oceani prætentus aquis, quo fertur Ulysses
> Sanguine libato populum movisse silentem;
> Illuc umbrarum tenui stridore volantum,
> Flebilis auditur quæstus; simulacra coloni
> Pallida, defunctasque vident migrare figuras.

This view may be considered to be confirmed by earlier notices. Mr. T. W. Rolleston draws attention to a passage

in De Jubainville's *Irish Mythological Cycle*, which is to the following purport: According to an unknown writer cited by Plutarch, who died about the year 120 of the present era, and also by Procopius, who wrote in the sixth century A.D., the Land of the Dead is the western extremity of Great Britain, separated from the eastern by an impassable wall. On the northern coast of Gaul, says the legend, is a populace of mariners whose business is to ferry the dead across from the Continent to their last abode, in the island of Britain. The mariners, awakened in the night by the whisperings of some mysterious voice, arise and go down to the shore, where they find ships awaiting them not their own, and in these invisible beings under whose weight the vessels sink almost to the gunwales. They go on board, and with a single stroke of the oar, says one text, in one hour, says another, they arrive at their destination, though with their own vessels, aided by sails, it would have taken them at least a day and a night to reach the coast of Britain. When they come to the other shore, the invisible passengers land; and at the same time the unloaded ships are seen to rise above the waves, and a voice is heard announcing the names of the new arrivals, who have just been added to the inhabitants of the Land of the Dead.

We find from Souvestre's *Les Derniers Bretons* that this belief lasted right down to the last century, and even now it may be not entirely extinct. Near Saint-Gildas, he tells us, fishermen of evil life, and who care little for the salvation of their souls, are sometimes awakened in the night by three knocks struck by an invisible hand on their door. Then, impelled by a supernatural will, they rise, wend their way to the shore, and there find long black boats which seem empty and yet dip in the sea to the crest of the waves. Soon as they have entered, a great white sail hoists itself aloft to the top of the mast, and, as though carried along by a swift current, the barque leaves the strand. It is added that these boats, laden with accursed souls, are never again seen on the shore, and the fisherman

is compelled to wander across the ocean with them to the crack of doom. The legend, it will have been noticed, has been somewhat modified by Christian influence—only the souls of the wicked make the voyage, and to them is vouchsafed no haven of rest—but essentially the tradition is unchanged.

Mrs. Macquoid states that Arthur was conveyed by Merlin to the Île de Sein, the principal sanctuary of the Druidesses, to be healed of his wounds—not, as commonly alleged, by Morgan le Fay to the Isle of Avalon, whether in Britain or off the coast of Brittany. We presume Mrs. Macquoid must have some authority for her statement, although we have failed to find it. The legend of the enchantress still flourishes with unabated vigour on this rock-strewn shore; and nowhere, it may be supposed, is her maleficent charm more cruelly exercised than in the Baie des Trépassés.

"It is a Celtic belief," writes Le Braz, "that a fairy lives in the sea, a fairy beautiful as an angel, but cruel as death itself. They say that she has the face and bosom of a maiden, but for the rest is a monster covered with scales and ending in a fish's tail. Her beautiful form is seen rising above the water on those still evenings that often precede great storms. Her loose hair floats above the waves, and from her lips rises a sweet, sad song, so full of passionate love that the very boats stop to listen. As for the sailors themselves, bewildered, fascinated, they cannot turn away their eyes from the enchantress, whose white arms beckon them. Then a madness seizes them, and flinging off their clothes, all naked, they plunge in the waves to go to her. . . .

"The fairy loves these terrible surroundings to her love-making. Her kisses breathe so fierce a passion that her lovers die at once, as though poisoned. The mouth upon which hers has fastened suddenly detaches itself, withered, gasping, silent for ever. Along all the Breton coast there is not a family but has some murder with which to reproach her, and they call her Mary Morgan, Born of the Sea. She

is one, yet many. Numberless have been her incarnations, yet the same sinful soul always reappears:

Ahes breman Mary Morgan."

Souvestre also has something to say about "Mary Morgan"—the name by which the fairy Morgan appears to be always called in Brittany—and what he says is extremely curious. A Mary Morgan, he informs us, inhabits the Duke's pond near Vannes. She comes out of it sometimes, to braid her green hair in the sun. One day a soldier surprised her on her rock, and, attracted by her beauty, approached her. But Mary Morgan wound her arms about him and drew him to the bottom of the pond. Should you ask the people what this fairy of the waters is, this is what they will tell you:

A princess to whom the Duke's pond belonged had refused to marry a great lord who owned the Pond of Plesance. However, worn out with his entreaties, she said to him one day, "I will be yours whenever the Pond of Plesance runs into that of the Duke." She thought she was demanding what was impossible, but the lord had a canal dug which joined the two ponds; and one day he invited the lady to a fête he was giving in his Castle of Plesance, and took her in a boat right to the Duke's pond. There he said to her, "I have fulfilled your wish; fulfil now your promise, and become mine."

But the princess, overcome with grief, would not give herself body and soul to the lord, whom she did not love, whilst, on the contrary, she was fond of another; and, leaning in desperation over the side of the boat, she plunged head-foremost to the bottom of the lake, whence she never again returned. Only, from that day forward, there was a Mary Morgan lovely as the day, and it is thought that it is the princess who has taken that form, and who shows herself o' summer evenings on the rocks that border the water, combing her long tresses and making garlands of corn-flags. To this story might be added that

of the Groac'h, or naiad, of the well of Vannes, but this would be to carry us too far.

Sir John Rhys has some interesting remarks on this topic, which may well be quoted. Referring to the influence of French romances which speak of a lake lady, Morgain, Morgan, or Morgre, he observes that the character varied. "Morgain le Fay," he says, "was a designing and wicked person, but Morgan was also the name of a well-disposed lady of the same fairy kind, who took Arthur away to be healed in the Isle of Avallon. We seem to be on the track of the same confusing influence of the name when it occurs in the story of *Geraint and Enid*; for there the chief physician of Arthur's court is called Morgan Tut, or Morgant Tut, and the word *tut* has been shown by M. Loth to have meant the same sort of non-human being whom an eleventh-century Life of St. Mandez mentions as *quidam dæmon quem Britones Tuthe appellant.* Thus the name Morgan Tut is meant as the Welsh equivalent of the French Morgain le Fay, or Morgan la Fée; but so long as the compiler of the story of *Geraint and Enid* employed in the Welsh the form Morgan (so common in Wales as, exclusively, a man's name), he had practically no choice but to treat the person called Morgan as a man, whether that was or was not the sex in the original texts on which he was drawing. Of course, he could have avoided the difficulty, in case he was aware of it, if he had found some available formula in use like Mary-Morgant, said to be a common name for a fairy on the Island of Ouessant, off the coast of Brittany."

A correspondent of the Professor, Mrs. Williams-Ellis, throws some light on the modern state of the belief in the Principality. "Our younger boys," she wrote to him, "have a crew of three little Welsh boys, who live near the lake, to join them in their boat-sailing about the pool, and in camping on the island, etc. They asked me once who Morgan was, who the little boys were always saying they were to be careful against. An old man living at Tal Llyn, 'Lake's End,' a farmer close by, says that as a boy he

was always told that naughty boys would be carried off by Morgan into the lakes. Others tell me that Morgan is always ready to take off troublesome children, and somehow, Morgan is thought of as a bad one."

The tendency of this evidence, when carefully compared, strongly favours the conclusion that Morgan le Fay, as she is found in Arthurian poetry and romance, was distinctly, and beyond reasonable doubt, a Breton creation.

On the last occasion when we made mention of the Castor and Pollux of Celtic Christendom, Gildas and Cadoc, we found the topic so involved as not to invite any fresh excursion into the tangled labyrinth; but we do not flatter ourselves that it is possible to write on Arthurian Brittany without taking up the theme in its Breton aspects. In his *A Book of Brittany*, Mr. Baring-Gould propounds the pleasant theory that the Glastonbury and Breton accounts of St. Gildas are supplementary of each other; but we also note that, during the interval that elapsed between the publication of that work and that of its fellow, *A Book of South Wales*, from which our previous quotation was taken, the author's opinions on various important points underwent a change, and he gave up thinking that the holy Gildas fought in the terrible battle of Cattraeth, and made it the subject of "his noble poem *Y Gododin*." In his earlier book, Mr. Baring-Gould allows that Gildas was the son of Caw, Warden of the Antonine Wall, and grandson of Geraint, Prince of Devon, who fell fighting the Saxons in the battle of Langport, in Somerset. Geraint appears to have had domains in Brittany. Le Palais, at Belle Île, is said to have been his residence, and the founder of the church in that place, tradition asserts, was *Saint* Geraint, whom Mr. Baring-Gould confidently pronounces the husband of the fair Enid. The matter is by no means free from difficulty. Gildas was at least twenty-nine, and may have been over fifty in 522, which Mr. Baring-Gould gives as the date of the battle of Langport; therefore, if Geraint, the hero of the combat, was his grandfather, he must have been of a patriarchal age at the time of his death.

As we have seen, the Armorican tradition of Gildas centres at Rhuys, or Rhoë-is (said to signify "royal"), one of the two promontories—the other is that of Locmariaker—which shut in the Morbihan, or the Little Sea, from the Atlantic Ocean, with which it communicates by a channel at Arzon. On this rocky peninsula, twenty miles long by six wide, Gildas is said to have established in the sixth century a monastery, and more inland he founded another. Before his death, in 570, he gave directions that his body should be placed in a boat, which was to be allowed to drift out to sea. "This," observes Mr. Baring-Gould, "smacks of a lingering paganism in the heart of Gildas. He desired his mortal remains to be shipped to the Land of the Blessed under the setting sun." That may be, but it is just as likely, and perhaps more likely, that Gildas hoped that his bones might find sepulture in the land of his birth. Mr. Baring-Gould, however, is not disposed to treat this incident seriously, for he continues: "The people on the mainland, in their greed for relics, pursued it (the body) in boats. However, before reaching it, a wave swept over the little vessel, and the body sank. Three months later, a corpse was washed up on the sands of Le Croisic, which the monks of Rhuys were pleased to suppose was that of their abbot. How, after having been rolled about in the sea for three months, they were able to recognise it we are not told. But it answered their purpose, wheresoever the body was; it originated a cult, and some of the relics of this body, probably not that of Gildas at all, but of some sailor, are still shown at S. Gildas de Rhuys."

We must confess that, instead of this rationalistic semi-humorous account, we prefer a more reverent and sympathetic version of a legend which is not worth the powder and shot of historical criticism. Such may be read in Mrs. Macquoid's *Through Brittany*, where she writes: "St. Gildas is only six kilomètres from Sarzean. The village looked small and insignificant, but we found the abbey-church extremely interesting; the choir and apse, with its

three round chapels, and the transepts are very old; the nave of much later date; it has been badly restored. The monastery is said to have been founded in the sixth century by St. Gildas, surnamed Le Sage. His tomb stands behind the high altar, for though he died in his hermitage in the Île Houath, his body was miraculously restored to the monks of Rhuys. . . . In Rogation Week, as the monks went in solemn procession, after their custom, to the oratory of St. Croisic, built by Gildas, they perceived close by a boat, dry in the sands, and in the boat lay the body of St. Gildas, as perfect as when they last saw it. As a memorial of this recovery they took the stone from under the head of the saint and placed it in the chapel of the Holy Cross; and carrying the body of St. Gildas back to the Abbey of Rhuys, they buried it there on the 12th day of May, 570."

Next as to St. Cadoc. Following the coast from Plouharnel and Erdeven northwards, the traveller arrives at the land-locked Sea of Belz, or river of Etel, situated between sand-hills. Entering this creek, one proceeds through a narrow channel four miles in length, when the water broadens out and for seven or eight miles pushes inland. Like the Morbihan, it is studded with islets, and the surface is broken by long tongues of island. Connecting the mainland with the Île de St. Cadoc is a causeway which that reverend man is said to have constructed. His business in Brittany was to set up schools as nurseries for his Abbey of Llancarvan, and he settled on this islet in the Etel lagoon. He did not, however, confine his energies to this one spot, but after a time journeyed to many parts of Brittany, where he founded institutions for the purpose of peopling his beloved abbey. All over Brittany are chapels dedicated in his honour; and his "pardon" is on the fourth Sunday in October.

St. Cadoc is one of the three elect saints whose careers the Vicomte de la Villemarqué has traced at considerable length in his *La Légende Celtique et la Poésie des Cloîtres*. In this volume St. Cadoc represents Wales, St. Patrick

Ireland, and St. Hervé Brittany. Neither of the two latter has a claim to mention here, though St. Hervé appears to have flourished in Arthur's days. With St. Cadoc it is different. He is as Arthurian as Gildas, in whose company we have found him; and therefore we may be pardoned for an extension based on M. de la Villemarqué's highly interesting sketch.

When menaced anew by the heathen invaders, the saint had to think of a surer retreat than that of Echni, and, setting sail towards Armorica, he put the ocean between himself and his enemies. Aware that the little isles of the archipelago of the Morbihan were inhabited chiefly by hermits from South Wales, and that he would perhaps meet with old disciples, he directed his steps thither. He found, in fact, in the Isle of Groix the hermit Gunthiern, who, like himself, was a son of a prince of Glamorgan, and farther off his friend Gildas living under a rock in which he had hollowed out a grotto for himself, fortifying it with a gate on the west side to defend himself from the winds, and on the east side piercing it with a window glazed with talc, in default of glass. The holy artist, so clever in working metals, was occupied with polishing and rounding two blocks of stone so as to make a grist-mill. In the same neighbourhood, and often in the company of Gildas, was living another emigrant—the most famous British poet of the time, who, like the saint, had passed through the school of Llancarvan. This was Taliesin, son of Onis, surnamed the King of Bards.

Gildas indicated to Cadoc as a retreat a little desert island (since called Cadoc's Island) situated on an arm of the sea, some leagues thence, which in the eighteenth century was still a dependency of the monastery of Rhuys. The Abbot of Llancarvan again set sail, and going along the coast, entered the River Plouhinec-Ektel, which he ascended as far as the little island of which Gildas had told him. The aspect of the place, covered with flourishing trees and tall herbs, pleased the holy emigrant and his fugitive tribe.

Cadoc's first care was to fell the trees, to build huts, and to cut reeds to thatch them. This was not shelter-proof against the buffets of sea-wind and rain, but encouraging the workers by his gaiety, he would say: "In ill fortune one must get along as one may; a reed roof is better than nothing." Later he was to construct more stable abodes, a real monastery. If we may put faith in a very old writer, he built it not of timber, but of dressed stones cemented with mortar; and in the middle he erected a chapel which is still standing, practically as it was in the eleventh century, which looked so beautiful that it was called "the queen" of the churches of the district.

To render the monastery more accessible to the Christians of the mainland, and the monastery school to the little children of the canton, who had had to cross twice a day to and from the island by boat, he threw over the arm of the sea a stone bridge which by reason of its length, the boldness of its two granite arches, the enormous blocks of stone of which it was composed and its monumental solidity, excited the admiration of contemporaries.

This wonder of the age was bound to inspire, and did in fact inspire, a thousand marvellous tales. Beyond the sea, in the eleventh century, the monks of Llancarvan recounted how that, on the morrow of the day on which the bridge was constructed, the disciples of St. Cadoc, having gone early in the morning to enjoy the treat of beholding its magnificence at sunrise, found it fallen into the sea. On perceiving which they went to the church, and, prostrating themselves with their faces to the ground, they fasted three days and three nights, imploring God to console them for so great a misfortune. Now the third night an angel appeared to one of them, and said, "The Lord hath heard your prayer; to-morrow ye will find the bridge in the place where it was."

The next day, after mattins, the monk to whom the angel had spoken revealed the vision to his brethren, and all, filled with joy and hope, ran towards the shore, where they found the bridge restored, and even seven times

stronger than before. Tidings of the miracle spread through the country, and the Christians round about redoubled their praises to God and their acknowledgments to St. Cadoc.

In the last century the children of the Morbihan—the name of the department as well as of the inland sea—used to tell the following story, worthy of their tender age and of their predecessors who centuries before went to school on the island.

The saint, it was said, could not succeed in finishing his work, for the Devil, foreseeing the harm he would experience from it, would demolish in the night the fruit of the saint's labours during the day, and so well that Cadoc, wearied out, resolved to employ a ruse against his redoubtable adversary. "What wilt thou," he asked, "that I shall give thee, so that I may build my bridge?" "The first living creature that shall pass over it," replied the Evil One; "is that too much, seeing that all the others must belong to thee?" "Agreed!" answered the saint. And the bridge being finished, he loosed a black cat which he had kept concealed in his sleeve, saying to the Devil, "Be quick; lo, there is a creature passing." "Old Pol," as they call him, thinking to seize a soul, sprang towards the bridge, amidst bursts of laughter from the saint, who rejoiced so heartily that he fell backwards, legs and arms in the air, and made a slide, the mark of which, it is said, has remained on the rock to this day. Ashamed and confounded at the deception practised on him, the Devil leapt into the sea and never afterwards reappeared.[1]

Another tradition, more serious and at the same time more touching, is still current in Armorica concerning the bridge, which was the means of bringing to mass or to school the men or the children of the villages adjacent to the Isle of Cadoc. Like so many others, Gildas had come

[1] It is singular that a very similar story is told of Torr Steps, near Dulverton (see my *Book of Exmoor*, p. 262), though in this instance the Devil built the bridge. The cat episode is almost identical. Is this a genuine coincidence, or has some learned impostor transplanted the story, adapted, from Brittany to the outskirts of Exmoor?

to view a work which he was bound to admire all the more because he had built a monastery and a church on the peninsula of Rhuys. He found it worthy of his praises, and said to his friend, "Blessed be he who has built the new bridge which leads from the land to the island." At once humbly and magnificently Cadoc made answer, "Much more blessed would he be who should build a bridge leading from earth to heaven!"

Only one more topic of outstanding importance remains to be dealt with, and that is the Forest of Broceliande (Brécéliande, Brécilien). It was in this forest that Merlin and Vivien—lovers not perhaps so ill-assorted as Tennyson portrays them—straying hand in hand, found a bush of white hawthorn full of flowers and seated themselves in its shade. Merlin laid his head in the maiden's lap and fell asleep. Then softly she arose, and with her wimple made a "cerne" nine times around the bush and around Merlin, and nine times made she the enchantments he had taught her, so that when the magician awoke he discovered himself in a fortress from which he never came out. According to one version of the legend, Arthur missed Merlin and sent several of his knights in quest of him. Among them was Gawain, whom a vengeful damsel turned into an ugly dwarf. In this evil case he was traversing the Forest of Broceliande, when suddenly on his right hand he heard the voice of one groaning, and looking that way, he could perceive nothing save a kind of smoke that seemed like air, through which he was not able to pass. Then was heard the voice of Merlin, saying, "Ah, sir, you will never see me more, and that grieves me, but I cannot remedy it; and when you shall have departed from this place, I shall never more speak to you, nor any other, save only my mistress."

In the *Prophecies of Merlin* the scene is laid, not in the forest of Broceliande, but in that of Arvantes, and the tale itself is somewhat different, in that Vivien induces Merlin to enter a tomb he had built for himself, and then closes down the lid so that it cannot be again raised.

In the forest of Broceliande is the magic fountain of Baranton, of which we are told in the *Chevalier au Lion* that, by spilling some of the water on a massive stone thereby, it was possible to call forth terrific storms that would cause deer, boars and birds to issue from the wood. In the local traditions the properties of the fountain are much the same, but kinder. During seasons of drought the inhabitants of the neighbouring parishes repair thither, headed by five large banners, the priests ringing bells the while and chanting psalms. At the fountain the foot of the cross is dipped in the waters, and before a week has gone by there is rain. The fountain is now in the charge of fairies, who are to be seen sometimes on its banks, decked in white. Babes are said to have been carried thither to receive the fairies' benediction, and not in vain, for the white ladies delight to shower on their protégés all manner of choice gifts.

"In my childhood," writes the Vicomte de la Villemarqué, "I had heard of Merlin so often and read of such wonderful things concerning his tomb—in our romances of Breton chivalry—the forest of Brécilien, and the fountain of Baranton, and the valley of Concoret—that I was seized with a lively desire to visit those spots, and one fine morning I set out. Ploërmel is the nearest town to Concoret; thence to the *bourg* the route is long and difficult — always winding roads, mountains, woods, moors without end.

. . . . . .

"The plain, which is called in Breton Concoret and in the romances of the Middle Age the Valley of the Fays, is a huge amphitheatre crowned with dark woods once named Broc'hallean,[1] now corrupted to Brécilien. At one of its extremities flows a spring, near which are discerned two moss-clad rocks surmounted by an old cross of worm-eaten wood. This is the fountain of Baranton and Merlin's

[1] Villemarqué states that this name signifies the Wood of the Nun or Hermitess. Similarly Concoret—*Kun-hored*—means the Valley of the Druidesses.

tomb. There, 'tis said, sleeps the old Druid to the lullaby of the waters and the wind that sighs in the brakes around.

"From this eminence one takes in the whole of the valley and a boundless horizon of woods, fields filled with wheat or with yellow-blossoming broom, parishes and distant spires.

"Brécilien was one of those hallowed forests dwelt in by the priestesses of Druidism in the Gauls. Its name and that of its valley would bear witness to it, even were there no other evidence. The names of places are the surest vouchers of past events."

The forest of Broceliande, of which the wood of Paimpont, near Plélan, is now the only remaining portion, was formerly of much greater extent. During the first Christian centuries the central part of Brittany was forest, and the vast woodland, from the sources of the Ellé, Odet and the Elorn to the Vilaine, was the haunt of wild beasts. Just as the English settlers made clearings in the primeval forests of Virginia, so, it is thought, colonists from Britain hewed down the timber of the vast Armorican forest, greatly diminishing its area, and in some of the spaces thus formed establishing monasteries. Little by little the region of farms and fruitful fields extended itself, until scarcely more was left of the immense forest but that part of it known throughout the Middle Ages as the Forest of Broceliande.

The fountain of Baranton is on the fringe of the forest west of Plélan, not far from the border of the département and the Lande of Concoret; while Merlin's tomb, the massive stone of which we have spoken, is actually a ruined dolmen.

Where the writer of the Scottish romance of Merlin supposed the forest of Broceliande to be situated is not clear, but there are signs that he confused it with the Caledonian Forest, or some portion of the latter. He makes Merlin land at Dover, sojourn at Logres (evidently conceived to be a city in Britain), and then go on a visit to his master Blase (Bleys), who, we know, "dwelt in Northumberland." We next read, "Then departed Merlin

from Blase, and in little space came to his love," with whom we find him disporting himself in the forest of "Brochelonde." Similar confusion may be detected in the romances of Chrétien. In that of *Le Chevalier au Lion*, Arthur's court is said to have been at Carduel in Wales, and in the Mabinogi of *The Lady of the Fountain*, another version of the same tale, it is stated to have been at Caerlleon-upon-Usk. This may seem to establish the identity of Carduel and Caerlleon, but although Chrétien speaks of Carduel as being in Wales, he brings that place into such close relations with Brittany as to lead a recent editor to observe, "In his version the poet forgets that the sea separates the court of Carduel from the forest of Broceliande. His readers, however, probably passed over this *lapsus*." Doubtless they did, for these romances are steeped in a continental atmosphere. Souvestre points to the forest of Broceliande as a centre of Arthurian traditions, for "there," says he, "we meet with the fountain of Baranton, the Val sans Retour, and Merlin's Tomb." The Val sans Retour naturally connects with the mysterious country referred to in the romance of *Lancelot*:

> Dont nul estranges ne retourne
> Mès par force el païs sejorne
> En servitude et en essil.

In *Le Chevalier au Lion*, speaking of Arthur's fame, the poet observes:

> Si m'accort de tant as Breton
> Quar toz jors durera li renons
> Et par els sont amateu
> Li boen chevalier es leu
> Qui a enor se travaillerent.

Mr. Comfort thus translates the passage: "And I agree with the opinion of the *Bretons* that his name will live on for evermore. And in connection with him we call to mind those goodly chosen knights who spent themselves for honour's sake." Souvestre seizes on this passage as evidence of the Armorican origin of the Arthurian stories, but we may fairly ask whether in such a context "Breton"

may not have the wider significance of Briton. In the preamble to *Cligés*, Chrétien speaks of "England, which was called Britain in those days." There is no mistaking, however, the sense in which Souvestre uses the term "Breton." He roundly declares, "In the romance of *Erec et Enide* and in that of *Lancelot du Lac* by Chrétien de Troyes, all the heroes are Bretons. It is certain that the two poems must have been written after pre-existing Breton lays. Fouque de Marseille speaks, too, of the Breton lays. Thus the literature of the Armoricans was known to the Troubadours."

Later he states that a large number of Breton lays were translated by Marie de France and had a great success, contemporary writers always talking of them as lays borrowed from Armorican literature. Pierre de Saint-Cloud, for example, praises the *moult bons lais bretons*. Here, then, we might look for a mine of Arthurian legend, but let us take care not to pitch our expectations too high, or we may be disappointed.

Marie de France, an Anglo-Norman poetess who flourished about 1150, herself testifies not once, but often, that her *lais* were derived from Breton sources. In these tales we meet with such statements as *En cel tems tint Artus la terre*, but there is very little in them about Arthur himself. True, the Round Table is mentioned, as are also some of the knights, such as Gawain. Tristan, Iseult and Brangien are also named, and in a way showing that the story of their relations was perfectly familiar to the poetess and presumably to the circle she addresses. Lancelot is not mentioned, but we are told of a certain Lanval, who rejects the overtures of Arthur's queen, out of loyalty to his fairy mistress in the Isle of Avalon. The general inference is that, if the legends connected with Arthur are not now largely represented in Breton folklore, they were once. Stephens lays stress on a remark of Alanus de Insulis (Alain de l'Isle), a contemporary of Marie de France, that the Breton people would have stoned anyone who dared to deny the reality of Arthur; and he does not fail

to point out that Geoffrey of Monmouth ascribes the origin of parts of his *History* to Breton tradition. He considers, however, that the most valid argument in favour of the Breton claim is the statement in the Iolo MSS. that, in 1077, Rhys ab Tewdwr brought the bardic system of the Round Table from Brittany to Wales. Accordingly he holds that "the conclusion is both legitimate and irresistible that the romantic Arthur is a creation of the Armorican Kymry."

If this is true of Arthur, it seems to be even truer of Lancelot. In Chrétien's *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*, that knight declares that he was born in the Kingdom of Logres; and he also states that he belongs to Arthur's realm, the two being obviously distinct, for the distressed damsel whom Lancelot rescues, but refuses to love, speaks of "the customs and practices observed before we were made captive in the Kingdom of Logres." The poem opens with the conventional incident of a challenge at an Ascension Day feast in Arthur's splendid court at Camelot. It is worthy of notice that Camelot and Lancelot are names which seem formed on the same fanciful principle, and that principle a French one.

Now as to Logres. The term "Lloegyr" is applied by the Welsh writers to Saxon England, but that may not be the sense here. The Triads tell us that Britain was peopled by a race from Gwlad yr Hav (which some identify with the Tauric Chersonese) and afterwards by immigrants from Gaul; the Brythons from Lydaw and the Loegrwys from Gascony. According to this story the original Loegr was Gascony, which may also be Chrétien's Logres. Malory states that Lancelot's hereditary dominion, Benwick, was in the opinion of some Bayonne.

In perusing Chrétien's poem, it is most difficult to escape the feeling that all the time we are in France. Take, for example, the passage in which the Knight of the Cart and the damsel, travelling together, ride through the mown fields to a church and churchyard, where a very old monk shows Lancelot, who will not disclose his name, "the most

beautiful tombs that one could find as far as Dombes or Pampelune; and on each tomb there were letters cut, telling the names of those who were destined to be buried there. And he began in order to read the names, and came upon some which said: 'Here Gawain is to lie, here Louis, and here Yvain.'"

Now, of course, Chrétien does not state in so many words that the situation of this wonderful churchyard was somewhere between Dombes (a principality in Burgundy perhaps) and Pampeluña, on the frontier of Spain, but the language is suggestive to such a degree as hardly to allow us to think of the "very pleasant spot" as being in Britain. This is one illustration of what we intended by saying that these poems are steeped in a Continental atmosphere. They point to the continuation or revival of a process that may well have been at work centuries before.

LLOEGYR

We have now completed the circuit of King Arthur's Country in a sufficiently catholic sense of that expression, but it cannot have escaped the notice of readers of Malory that Arthur and his knights move about quite freely in various parts of Britain not yet included in our survey, just as if there were no Saxons to hinder them. Occasionally their excursions take them into the realm of Logris, with the inhabitants of which they appear to have been on the most amicable terms. We have already said something about this realm. The one fact that stands out with undeniable clearness is that, after the Saxon conquest, Lloegyr was the name which the Cymry applied to England south of the Humber. It had an eponymus in one Locrinus, son of Brutus and brother of Albanactus, ancestor of the Gaels of Alban, or Celtic Scotland. Milton introduces him into his *Comus*:

> Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
> Sprung of old Anchises' line.

As may be inferred from the poem, the legend of "Locrine" is closely connected with the Severn.

In returning from Brittany to Britain, one is struck with certain archæological analogies. Referring to the former country, Miss Plumptre writes:

"There are in more than one place near the western coast stones set up in the same manner as those at Stonehenge.[1] A species of genii called *Gaurics* are supposed to dance among them, and the stones are called in general *Choirgaur*, or the Giant's Dance. In one of the places where some of these stones are to be seen, the people

[1] For an account of the alignments at Carnac and Kermario, see *The French Stonehenge*, by T. Cato Worsfield.

of the neighbourhood, if asked what they mean, say that it was a procession to a wedding which was all in a moment changed into stone for some crime, but they do not know what. In another place they are reputed to be the funeral procession of a miser, who received this punishment because in his lifetime he had never given anything to the poor."

Now let us turn to Stonehenge. Geoffrey of Monmouth has a long account of the removal of "the Giant's Dance" from Killaraus, in Ireland, to Wiltshire, where by the command of Aurelius Ambrosius, and through the skill of Merlin, the stones were set up as a memorial of the "consuls and princes" slain by Hengist on that very spot in the Treachery of the Long Knives. Merlin, in conversation with Aurelius, explains: "They are mystical stones, and of a medicinal virtue. The giants of old brought them from the farthest coast of Africa, and placed them in Ireland, while they inhabited that country. Their design in this was to make baths in them, when they should be taken with any illness. For their method was to wash the stones, and put their sick into the water, which infallibly cured them. With the like success they cured wounds also, adding only the application of some herbs. There is not a stone there which has not some healing virtue."

At New Grange, on the northern bank of the Boyne, in Ireland, is a richly sculptured megalithic monument—a great chambered tumulus. There are other tumuli in the neighbourhood, and concerning them all the Irish mythical literature states that they are the abodes of the Sidhe, or fairies, representing probably the ancient deities of the country. They are likewise the traditional burial-places of the High Kings of Ireland.

With regard to the curative baths, it may be noticed that Mr. Morien Morgan suggests that, instead of Choir Gawr, "the Giant's Dance," we ought to understand *Cor y Gawres* in allusion to the Giantess Caridwen. Now a reference to the Mabinogi of *Taliesin* will show that Caridwen was the possessor of a magic cauldron, and

that according to the books of the astronomers, and in planetary hours, she gathered every day charm-bearing herbs. In this particular tale the cauldron is that of inspiration, but in the Mabinogi of *Branwen* we find Bran presenting Matholwch, King of Ireland, with a cauldron of regeneration, in which slain warriors were to be cast; and the idea of reincarnation attaches to Caridwen.

The magical properties which Merlin attributes to the stones of the Giant's Dance may help to account for the stone-worship of the megalithic people, which lingered on into the Christian era and was denounced by various synods and councils. It is even now not quite extinct; at Lacronan, in Brittany, for instance, the old pagan rites are celebrated under the guise of Christian symbols.

Geoffrey of Monmouth relates that an attempt was made to remove the stones from Ireland by mechanical means, and that they were unsuccessful. Supernatural agency is out of the question, but still there is some mystery attaching to the presence of such stones on Salisbury Plain. On this point Professor Judd remarks: "I may repeat my conviction that, if the prevalent belief or tradition concerning Stonehenge were true, and the bluestone circles were transported from some distant locality, either as trophies of war or as the sacred treasures of a wandering tribe, it is quite inconceivable that they should have been hewed and chipped, as we now know them to have been, and reduced in some cases to half their dimensions after having been carried with enormous difficulty over land and water, and over hills and valleys. On the other hand, in the glacial drift, which once probably thinly covered the district, the glacial deposits dying out very gradually as we proceed southwards, we have a source from which such stones might probably have been derived. . . . I would therefore suggest as probable that, when the early inhabitants of the island commenced the erection of Stonehenge, Salisbury Plain was sprinkled over thickly with the great white masses of the sarsen stones ('grey wethers') and much more sparingly with the darker-coloured boulders

(the so-called 'blue stones'), the last relics of the glacial drift, which have been nearly denuded away."

There appears to be no doubt that Stonehenge is the ruins of a solar temple constructed probably between 1900 and 1500 B.C. Its primary object was to enable the astronomer-priests, who dwelt in cromlechs, to ascertain the length of the year by observing the rise of the sun on the longest day. When the ancient stones ceased to be used for that purpose, "it is possible," writes Sir Norman Lockyer, "that burials may have taken place in some of the mounds then given up as dwelling-places. As sacred places, they were subsequently used for burials, as Westminster Abbey has been; but burials were not the object of their erection."

It is to be noticed that Geoffrey of Monmouth records the burial of Aurelius, Uther Pendragon and their descendants at Stonehenge; and in the apocryphal Shakespearean play, *The Birth of Merlin*, the sage, on being summoned to aid Pendragon against the Saxons, conveys his mother to a place of safety named Merlin's Bower, and consoles her with the assurance that on her death he will set up a monument

> Upon the verdant plains of Salisbury—
> (No king shall have so high a sepulchre)—
> With pendulous stones that I will hang by art,
> Where neither lime nor mortar shall be used,
> A dark enigma to the memory,
> For none shall have the power to number them.

Merlin's connection with Stonehenge may not seem to call for any special explanation, yet an explanation is forthcoming. In his *Myths of the Celtic Race*, Professor Rolleston informs us that in Arthur's mythological cycle Myrddin occupies the place of Nudd, or Lludd, the sky- and sun-god. He appears also to have exercised a kind of patronage over Britain, which, according to the Welsh Triads, bore the name of *Clas Myrddin*, or Merlin's Enclosure, before it became inhabited. Professor Rhys suggests that Myrddin was the deity specially worshipped

at Stonehenge, which is very likely if, in early days, he was a *solar* deity.

Here is an interesting point, taken from Sir Norman Lockyer's work on Stonehenge:

"We have in Stonehenge a solstitial temple—that is to say, a temple to make observations of the length of the year by observing the rise of the sun on the longest day of the year. The astronomer-priests had to watch the time at night by observing a star rise near the north point of the horizon. This star would act as a warner of sunrise at some time of the year. . . . *Arthur's star Arcturus*, used in some places as a clock-star, required an elevated horizon, being in three latitudes circumpolar."

Sir Norman, not being particularly concerned with Arthur, the italics, it need not now be said, are ours.

Amesbury, in Wiltshire, is a place of some importance to us. Here it was that Hengist gave a banquet to the British leaders, and under the cover of hospitality massacred 660 of them. It was to a nunnery here that Guinevere retired after the death of King Arthur—so at least Malory states, although Geoffrey says Caerleon. The name Amesbury is a contraction of Ambresburh, and that is, in all probability, derived from Ambrosius. "Welsh legend," writes Professor Rhys, "associates the name of Ambrosius mostly with the southern portion of Lower Britain, especially with Ambresburh, or Amesbury, in Wiltshire, a part of the country where the contest with the West Saxons was probably very severe."

There are conflicting accounts of the death and burial of Gawain, but one tradition represents those events as occurring in Wiltshire. Aubrey says in his *Naturall History of Wilts*: "On the south-downe of the farme of Broad-Chalke is a little barrow called Gawen's barrow."

Winchester once passed as an Arthurian locality of the first rank. William Caxton, in his preface to the *Morte Darthur*, enumerates various proofs of Arthur's existence, and among them the following: "Item in the castle of Dover ye may see Gawaine's scull, and Cradok's mantle;

at Winchester the Table Round." We have found the Table Round in several parts of the country, but nowhere yet in the shape of an actual table. At the west end of Winchester Castle, however, over the remains of a dais, hangs, and has hung for centuries, what purports to be the veritable Round Table of King Arthur and his knights. Drayton, not questioning its genuineness, wrote:

> And so great Arthur's seat ould Winchester prefers,
> Whose ould round table yet she vaunteth to be hers.

Whilst Warton, who might have been expected to know better, declares:

> High hung remains, the pride of former years,
> Old Arthur's board; on the capacious round
> Some British pen has sketched the names renown'd
> In marks obscure of the immortal peers.

The names are there—as well as a picture of Arthur in the centre—but the penman was not British in the sense Warton intends. The painting was shown as a work of art by Henry VIII. to the Emperor Charles V., and Mr. L'Estrange, in his *Royal Winchester*, states that it dates from that period; others say from the reign of Stephen.

The table had twelve legs and twenty-five "sièges," or seats, one of them for the king, but the Table Round which Leodegrance had received from Uther Pendragon and gave to Arthur, was capable of accommodating "an hundred knights and fifty."

In his references to Camelot, Malory adds "that is, Winchester"—which gloss suggests that Winchester inherited the glories of the legendary Camelot. But both in Geoffrey's *History* and in the *Morte Darthur* Winchester receives independent mention. It was there that Aurelius Ambrosius died of poison, when "there appeared a star of wonderful magnitude and brightness, darting forth a ray at the end of which was a globe of fire in form of a dragon."

One other Hampshire town may be named—the old

Roman town of Silchester (Calleva Attrebatum), in which, according to Geoffrey, Arthur was crowned. (Malory's story is that Arthur was crowned at Rome by the Pope.) To Geoffrey's statement much interest is imparted by recent excavations at Silchester, which have laid bare the foundations of a perfect Roman town—forum, basilica, rows of shops and houses.

In 1892 a remarkable discovery was made at Silchester by Messrs. G. E. Fox and W. H. St. John Hope. It consisted of the foundation of a building which, the most competent authorities agree, was a Christian church. Too small for a basilica—and the existence of such an edifice not far away renders the conjecture unnecessary — the apse, the aisles and the narthex, or porch, were distinctly ecclesiastical, and the whole presented a striking family likeness to fourth-century Christian churches which have been found in Italy, Africa and Syria. The nave was paved with coarse red tesseræ, the pavement was unbroken in level, and in front of the apse was a panel of fine mosaic, which probably marked the position of the altar. There were indications that a marble altar had been substituted for an earlier wooden table, and that the walls were coated with coloured plaster. Can it have been here that Arthur was crowned?

Caxton's assertion that in his day Gawaine's skull and Cradock's mantle were to be seen at Dover Castle hardly brings the port into the category of Arthurian places, nor do such allusions in Malory's text to the Cinque Ports as "Sir Petipase of Winchelsea" compel us to pause. If such claims were admissible, our task would be indeed endless. With London, however, it is different, for to the Cymry it was one of their own cities. The Mabinogi of *Llud and Llevelys* thus opens:

"Beli the Great, the son of Manogan, had three sons, Lludd, and Caswallawn [Casivellanuus], and Nynyaw; and according to the story he had a fourth son called Llevelys. And after the death of Beli, the Kingdom of the Island of Britain fell into the hands of Lludd, his eldest son; and

Lludd ruled prosperously, and rebuilt the walls of London, and encompassed it about with numberless towers. And after that he bade the citizens build houses therein, such as no houses in the kingdom could equal. And moreover he was a mighty warrior, and generous and liberal in giving meat and drink to all that sought them. And though he had many castles and cities, this one he loved more than any. And he dwelt therein most part of the year, and therefore it was called Caer Lludd, and at last Caer London. And after the stranger came there it was called London, or Lwndrys."

Moreover, in the Mabinogi of *Branwen* the Blessed Bran gives commandment for his head to be cut off and carried even unto the White Mount in London, where it was to be buried with the face toward France. We learn from the Triads that it was intended to serve as a charm against invasion, but Arthur disdained such succour, and dug up the head of the Blessed Bran, the son of Llyr, saying that he chose not to hold the island save by his own strength. The Gwynvryn, or White Mount, is supposed to be the Tower. A twelfth-century Welsh poet, Llywarch ab Llewelyn, speaks of it as "The White eminence of London, a place of splendid fame."

Perhaps it is in consequence of this fame that London and Westminster are the scenes of some of the most important episodes in the *Morte Darthur*. Probably in Malory's time Silchester was forgotten, and therefore in his narrative Arthur's election as Pendragon takes place in London. Towards the end of the book Arthur is represented as keeping his court at Westminster, within seven miles of which is the castle of Meliagrance, to which Guinevere is carried off, when maying. And hereabouts was Guildford, which Malory identifies with Astolat: "And then he (Sir Lancelot) rode so much until he came to Astolat, that is Gilford." Professor Rhys considers that the name Guildford is disguised in the *Grand St. Graal* as Castle Galafort, and he supposes it to be the Gelbort from which Chrétien's Gonemans hails.

Outside the British Isles and Brittany we discover what may be termed an Arthurian colony in Sicily, whither, it is to be imagined, the Norman conquerors of that island transported the legends with which they had become acquainted in North-West France. Sir Edward Strachey, in the Introduction to his edition of the *Morte Darthur*, adduces some singular evidence of the manner in which traditions of Arthur had taken root in Sicilian soil:

"But more than three hundred years before Leland wrote, this still living legend had been recorded by Gervase of Tilbury, who, in his *Otia Imperialia* (date about 1212), says that in the woods of Britain the foresters, as the common people call the keepers of the woods and wild game, tell that on alternate days, about noon, or at midnight when the moon is full and shining, they often see an array of hunters with dogs and sounds of horns, who, in answer to the inquirers, say that they are of the household and fellowship of Arthur. And, what is still more curious, Gervase, in the same place, gives a legend of Arthur, of Mount Etna, which singularly corresponds with that just mentioned as still living among the mounds of ancient Camelot. He tells that the horse of the Bishop of Catania had run away from his groom, and when the groom was following him up the precipitous side of the mountain, he came upon an open place, where was the Great Arthur, resting upon a couch. Arthur ordered the horse to be brought back and restored to the bishop, sent him presents, and related how he had lain there all those years, suffering from wounds he had received in the battle with his nephew Mordred and Childeric, the leader of the Saxons."

As a pendant to this citation we may perhaps be pardoned for quoting a very pleasing passage from a volume of essays, entitled *The Vanished Country Folk*, by an accomplished writer, Mr. R. H. Gales. He is speaking of Morgan le Fay:

"By a strange chance her magical kingdom was transferred from Brittany to the interior of Mount Etna. The

Norman adventurers brought that Breton myth to Sicily, and so the island of Jove, of the Cyclops, of Empedocles, of Proserpine, became the island of Arthur and of Morgan. Here, by the work of her magical art, she entertains her assembled court, the wounded king and all her courtiers and companions with dazzling mirages and unsubstantial pageants, outdoing the splendour of hoar-frost or autumn leaves. Hence the phantasmagoria seen so often in the Straits of Messina is still called by her name, 'the fairy Morgan,' Fata Morgana. For my part, I find it difficult to believe that she is really an inhabitant of Sicily. Rather would I think of her as haunting some Celtic Paradise of wood and water, deep in trees, amid the kingfishers, by some emerald mere in Ireland, or by sapphire pools in Brittany, where a thousand kingfishers are flying and fishing together."

And so we arrive at the close of our long pilgrimage. It was eminently fit that we should enter upon it in Cornwall, where probably, in its crudest form, the story of Arthur took bodily shape, and not less fit perhaps that our wandering should terminate in the land where that story attained old age as a frail exotic. But it seems absurd and perilously near blasphemy to apply, in any sense, the term "old age" to the high romance of Arthur, wherein is the seed of immortality, which will go on inspiring, if not new poetry, new poetic imaginings in all the generations of civilised humanity yet to come. Ours has been the humble task to guide the wayfarer, not to the dizzy heights of Parnassus, but to the favoured acres over which still brood the spirits of Arthur and his knights in many a fanciful or fantastic tale of love and prowess. And now nought remains but to append the "Explicit."

THE END

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